A

PICTURE

OF THE

ISLE OF WIGHT.

Wyndham 14. P/. K.

290 h 17

A

PICTURE

OF THE

ISLE OF WIGHT,

DELINEATED

UPON THE SPOT,

IN THE YEAR 1793.

By H. P. W.

--------All is here, that the whole earth yields,
Variety without end:-----Sweet interchange
Of hill and valley, rivers, woods and plains,
Now land, now ſea, and ſhores with foreſt crown'd,
Rocks, dens and caves!

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MDCCXCIV.

TO THE

MARCHIONESS

OF

CLANRICARDE,

&c. &c.

HAVING had the honour and happineſs of frequently accompanying your Ladyſhip, through almoſt every part of the Iſle of Wight, I have preſumed to affix your name to the Dedication, of this attempt

tempt to ſhew that beautiful iſland in its proper colours.

Your Ladyſhip muſt be aware, that I am bound in a kind of duty to offer you this little tribute, as you will, occaſionally, recollect, in the peruſal of it, many of your own obſervations, which, you will perceive, I have not been unmindful of intermixing with my own.

My readers would have reaſon to accuſe me of vanity, if I ſhould wiſh them to conſider you, as a coadjutor in finiſhing this picture, though I muſt, candidly, avow that,

that, without your Ladyſhip's unpremeditated aſſiſtance, I ſhould, certainly, have humbly entitled the following pages, a Sketch, rather than a Picture of the Iſle of Wight.

I am,

Your LADYSHIP'S

Faithful and obedient

humble Servant,

HENRY PENRUDDOCKE WYNDHAM.

SALISBURY,
Auguſt 20th, 1794.

PREFACE.

HAVING paſſed a few ſummers in the Iſle of Wight, I thought that I could not employ ſome leiſure hours more agreeably to myſelf, or more uſefully to the public, than in tranſmitting to paper the obſervations which I occaſionally made, in my repeated excurſions to the different parts of the iſland.

I was the more induced to this amuſement, becauſe I felt, myſelf, the want of proper inſtructions, on my firſt acquaintance with the iſland, which might point out the beautiful varieties of its little diſtrict, or which might connect them in ſuch

a manner, as to make them acceſſible to the beſt advantage.

The common method at the inns in Cowes, Newport and Ryde, is to ſend the Itinerant from his quarters in a one-horſe chaiſe, with a little boy behind it, whoſe employment is, to open the gates on the road, and to perform the part of a guide through the journey. But as this juvenile guide is, perhaps, only acquainted with one uſual and beaten track, it is not uncommon, that the ſmalleſt deviation from it confounds his whole ſyſtem, and he is then as much, and often more, at a loſs in recovering his route, than the perſon whom he is appointed to conduct.

Upon the conſideration therefore, that thoſe parties, who might be deſirous of verging from the regular circle, ſhould not be

be confined to the direct line of rotation; I ſhall endeavour to mark out the routes, and attempt ſo to deſcribe their variegated ſituations, that the parties may be previouſly prepared for what they may expect to ſee, and, conſequently, may contract or lengthen their journeys, according to the time they may have allotted for their ramble, or as the deſcriptions may be ſuitable to their reſpective taſtes and inclinations.

The following pages being chiefly confined to local deſcriptions, I ſhall recommend thoſe, who may wiſh to be informed of the antient and modern hiſtory of the Iſle of Wight, to the excellent publication of Sir Richard Worſley, in which they will find every thing, that the moſt curious antiquary may be deſirous of knowing: I ſhall, at the ſame time, recommend the

map which accompanies that hiſtory, and which may be purchaſed ſeparately, to the inſpection of my readers, as it is, by far, the moſt accurate of any that has been hitherto publiſhed of the iſland.

As many perſons have erroneouſly ſuppoſed, that a tour of the Iſle of Wight might be completed in a ſingle day, and conſequently, have been ſo preſſed for want of time, on their arrival at Newport, that they have been reluctantly compelled to relinquiſh their purſuits, before they were ſcarcely commenced; I ſhall take leave to apprize the ſtranger, that the iſland cannot be, even tolerably, ſeen in leſs than three days, and he will find by the following routes, which I ſhall call the three grand routes, that the days of Midſummer will not be too long for either of them.

I have

I have, however, formed theſe routes for thoſe only, who may not have a proper command of their time, and who may wiſh to ſee the moſt of the iſland, in the ſhorteſt period.

But if a party ſhould have ſufficient leiſure, they may alſo undertake the other ſmaller excurſions, that are noticed in the following pages, or connect them with the grand routes, as may beſt accord with their conveniency.

I ſhall recommend the party to make the town of Newport their head quarters, where, either at the BUGLE, or the SUN Inn, they will find every accommodation neceſſary for their comfort, and whither they may return every evening from each day's excurſion.

I will

I will now ſuppoſe my traveller landed at Weſt Cowes, and, after a ſhort journey of five miles, that he is agreeably lodged at Newport, and preparing to depart *early* the following morning towards Freſhwater Gate and Yarmouth, that being the firſt of my three routes.

THE FIRST DAY, OR WESTERN TOUR.

	MILES.
From Newport to Cariſbrook Caſtle -	1½
Shorwell - - -	4
Brixton - - -	2
Mottiſtone - -	2
Brook Down - -	2
* Freſhwater Gate -	4
Needle Point - -	3
* Yarmouth - -	5
Calbourn - - -	6
Swainſton - - -	2
* Newport - - -	4
	35½

THE

THE SECOND DAY, OR EASTERN TOUR.

		MILES.
From Newport to	Wootton Bridge	4
	Binſted Parſonage	3
*	Ryde	2
	St. John's	1
	The Priory	3
	St. Helen's Green	1
*	Brading	4
	Sandham Heath	3
	Brading Down	3½
	Aſhey Sea-Mark	1½
	Newport	5
		31

THE THIRD DAY, OR SOUTHERN TOUR.

		MILES.
From Newport to	Standen	1½
	Pidford	1½
*	Niton	6
	St. Laurence	3½
*	Steephill	1
	St. Boniface	2
*	Shanklin	3
	Arreton	6
	St. George's Down	2
*	Newport	2
		28½

The

The places to which an aſteriſk is affixed, have the only accommodations for travellers, that are to be met with on theſe routes.

N. B. Horſes, and carriages of all kinds, may be hired at Newport, by thoſe who may not chooſe to bring their own over the water; but the party cannot be too early in engaging them, as there is a moſt extraordinary demand for them during the ſummer months.

A

PICTURE

OF THE

ISLE OF WIGHT.

BEFORE I begin upon the three great excurſions mentioned in the preface, I ſhall take ſome notice of the environs of Cowes, where it was my lot to remain for a conſiderable time; and from whence I had frequent opportunities to ſee a part of the Iſland, which does not generally fall within the obſervation of a caſual traveller.

The town of Cowes is ſituated on the ſteep declivity of a ſemicircular point of

land, on the ſummit of which is placed the church. The ſtreets are narrow and ill built, but they ariſe one above the other in ſuch a manner, that from the ſea, and oppoſite banks of the Newport river, the whole brow forms a very pictureſque aſſemblage of buildings, from the water's edge, to the higheſt top. The bathing, for the uſe of which there are four machines, is excellent; and the lodgings are numerous, and ſufficiently commodious for families of any magnitude; though, from the late faſhionable reſort to this place, they are here become much dearer in proportion to their goodneſs, than in any other part of the kingdom.

Cowes is the principal port of the Iſland, its harbour is good, and it is protected by a ſmall, and ſtill perfect caſtle, which was erected in the reign of Henry VIII.

From

		MILES.
From Cowes to	Gurnard's Bridge	2
	Rue Street - -	1
	Thorneſs - -	2½
	Newtown - -	4
	Shalfleet - -	1
	Swainſton - -	3
	Cowes - -	7
		20½

Having paſſed by Egypt, a houſe ſo called on the ſea ſhore, about half a mile from Cowes, we rode through a country, incloſed with hedges, but barren of trees, to Gurnard's Bridge: here was antiently a ſea-port, but at preſent, a common wherry is rarely to be ſeen in its contracted channel. It has been ſuppoſed, from the two words, which in the French and Engliſh languages are ſynonimous, that Rue Street, near Gurnard's Bay, was part of a Roman road, which commenced at Gurnard's Bridge,

and that it paſſed in a direct line from thence, through the foreſt of Parkhurſt, to Cariſbrook; but as no veſtiges of ſuch a road, either in Rue Street or in the foreſt, now remain; where, if any ſuch had ever exiſted, it muſt ſtill have been viſible, (this foreſt having never yet been diſturbed with the plough, nor with any other ſigns of cultivation) I am inclined to think, that ſuch an idea was the viſionary ſyſtem of ſome antiquarian, more zealous to ſupport a diſcovery of his own, than to be contented with the common hiſtory of the iſland: or, if there ſhould be any traces of an old road in any part of the foreſt, it might, probably, be of that which was expreſsly made by Sir Robert Holmes in 1671, for the accommodation of King Charles II. who, after landing at Gurnard's Bay, purſued his journey to Yarmouth through the foreſt of Parkhurſt, till he came to the great

great road that leads from Newport to Yarmouth, at which latter place Sir Robert, the then Governor, had built a large houſe, and in which he entertained the King. This houſe is now the inn.

Between Rue Street and Thorneſs is a ſmall farm, called Whippence, which, from the circumſtance of the ſcarcity of trees in this part of the iſland, deſerves ſome notice, from its being finely ſhaded by a conſiderable range of tall elms, that are ſo diſpoſed as to form a rich boundary to a wide and ſemicircular lawn, which gradually deſcends from the farm-houſe towards the ſhore.

Another farm, at Thorneſs, has its merit on the ſame account, as it is partly ſurrounded with ſome extenſive coppices.

Newtown ſends two Members to Parliament; the Town-Hall ſtands by itſelf, in which are elected the repreſentatives; the reſt

reſt of the village, as it has now no church, conſiſts of a few ſtraggling cottages, though there are viſible remains of antient ſtreets, and of a much greater population.

The church at Shalfleet is a large building, and its ſquare tower is of uncommon magnitude. The porch is coëval with the church, and is of Norman architecture. Here is the figure of a Biſhop, in relievo, with his arms extended in length, while each of his hands reſts upon the body of a griffin.

The country from Newtown to Swainſton is well wooded, and the timber thrives well.

Sir John Barrington has a handſome ſeat at Swainſton, ſituated in the midſt of a wide and ſylvan domain. We returned through part of the foreſt of Parkhurſt, by an intricate road, from which nothing intereſting appeared, to divert our attention from avoiding the bogs and the difficulties

of

of an uncultivated heath, till we approached within two miles of Cowes.

The whole of this ride is not practicable even for two-wheel chaiſes.

	MILES.
From Cowes to Eaſt Cowes -	1
Oſborn - -	1
Barton - -	0½
Brockwood -	1
Wootton - -	1
Wootton Bridge	1
Quarr Abbey -	2
Whippingham	4
Weſt Cowes -	3
	14½

A good horſe and carriage ferry conveyed us, over the Newport river, from Weſt to Eaſt Cowes, and we quickly aſcended a pleaſant hill, through cultivated fields, from whence I would adviſe my reader to look back, for the full enjoyment of

of the moſt beautiful view, that is preſented by the harbour and buildings of Cowes.

Oſborn Houſe ſtands on the ſummit of this hill, and conſequently commands extenſive views both of ſea and land. Great part of the houſe is modern, and it is one of the largeſt and beſt in the iſland. It is now tenanted by the Earl of Glencairne.

The houſe at Barton, which is only ſeparated from the former by a large field, is now occupied by a farmer: it is of the age of Elizabeth, and yet is ſtill proper for the reception of a gentleman's family. The woods, between theſe houſes and the ſea, are very extenſive, and are continued to the ſhore. We ſoon turned, on the left hand of the road, to admire the ſituation of Woodhouſe farm, and on returning to the road, a bridle track conducted us, through the ſhades of Brockwood, or Brookwood, by a pleaſant farm, called Palmer's, to

Wootton

Wootton Church, which has nothing more to recommend it, but its lofty ſituation, and a door-way of early Norman architecture.

As I ſhall defer the deſcription of Wootton Bridge and it's environs, to my firſt principal tour from Newport, I ſhall now purſue my ride to Quarr Abbey, the remains of which, however large, are rather unintereſting.

The refectory is now a barn. The farm-houſe is wholly modern, and erected with the old materials of the ruins. A few pointed arches ſtill ſhew themſelves in the walls of the offices, and ſome others of an earlier age. The old walls incloſed about ſixty acres around the abbey, moſt of which are now remaining, and two or three of the antient gateways are ſtill viſible.

The ſituation of the abbey is on a low meadow opening to the ſea, from whence it is diſtant about a quarter of a mile. This

meadow and the abbey are, on every other ſide, richly clothed with well-timbered and flouriſhing woods to a great extent. Returning from this luxuriant ſpot, by the neareſt way, we came to the great road between Newport and Ryde, and repaſſing Wootton Bridge, rode to Whippingham Church, from whence we ſoon recovered the early track of this morning's excurſion, which brought us again to Cowes. I muſt obſerve that the roads, around Quarr Abbey, are not to be undertaken by any ſort of carriages, except in the drieſt ſeaſon.

	MILES.
From Cowes to Northwood -	2½
Newport -	2½
Croſs the river to Fairlee - -	1
Whippingham -	3
Eaſt Cowes -	2
Cowes - -	1
	12

The

The roads are excellent on each ſide of the Newport River. The pariſh church of Cowes is at Northwood, to which that on the hill of Cowes is only a chapel of eaſe, though it is of much larger dimenſions than its mother church. A long aſcent leads from Cowes towards Northwood, and the incloſed country continues to the Foreſt Gate, from whence the naked heath to Newport reaches for nearly two miles.

On this heath, approaching to Newport, is erected the Houſe of Induſtry, the benefits of which have been ſenſibly felt, and are now acknowledged, by every claſs of people in the iſland. The poor are employed, well fed, clothed and inſtructed, and not a beggar is to be ſeen in any part of the iſland. The poor rates have been conſiderably lowered, and a great part of the original debt, which amounted to 18,000l. and which was raiſed on the cre-

dit of thoſe rates, for the erection and furniture of the buildings, has been paid off. The houſe is ſufficiently large for ſeven hundred people, and there are generally about ſix hundred reſident in it. Such are the advantages of this inſtitution for the ſupport and comfort of the poor; but we ought to be careful not to adduce them raſhly, as an argument or example in favour of ſimilar houſes, in the counties of England. The Iſle of Wight may, from the ſmallneſs of its extent, be juſtly conſidered and treated as one pariſh, and the population of it does not exceed twenty thouſand inhabitants. The Gentlemen and Clergy chiefly reſide in the iſland, and bind themſelves, by rotation, conſtantly to ſuperintend the management of the houſe. While this diligence is continued, of which there can be little doubt in ſo well bounded a diſtrict, the advantages muſt annually increaſe;

increaſe; but, if the Gentlemen ſhould ever be negligent in their attendance, the whole ſyſtem may be deſtroyed---the care of the poor may become an iniquitous job to contractors----or the poor may even be returned to their reſpective pariſhes, and bring a heavier burthen than before upon the farmers, who, for want of the practical knowledge of providing for them, would, for ſome time, be in a ſtate of anarchy and confuſion, while the ruins of the buildings would not compenſate for the debt, that might remain upon the ſecurity of the rates.

Newport is a handſome and well-built town, the ſhops are numerous, and as ſuperbly ſtocked as they are in moſt of the Engliſh cities. It chiefly conſiſts of three parallel ſtreets, from Eaſt to Weſt, and is ſuppoſed to contain about two thouſand ſix hundred inhabitants. Croſſing the bridge,

at

at the lower end of the town, to which the river from Cowes is navigable, we, ſoon after, turned to the left hand, and rode, within view of Fairlee Houſe, towards Whippingham, in our way to the Ferry of Cowes.

The principal object, from both theſe roads, is the Newport River, upon which two large Tide Mills project their rival fronts, but there are few coppices to enliven its banks, or to enrich its proſpects.

I ſhall now accompany my reader from Cowes, to his head quarters at Newport, from whence I would recommend him to make the afternoon's excurſion to the Caſtle of Cariſbrook, by doing which, at this interval, an hour's time will, at leaſt, be ſaved in his journey of the following day.

The three following routes have been conſidered, in the Preface, as the grand tour of the iſland, and I have thought it proper

proper to arrange them, for the benefit of the ſtranger, in a progreſſive climax, and therefore, I ſhall begin with the leaſt intereſting of the three, and end with the moſt magnificent. The firſt or Weſtern tour, is

	MILES.
From Newport to Cariſbrook -	1½
Shorwell - -	4
Brixton - -	2
Mottiſtone - -	2
Brook Down -	2
* Freſhwater Gate	4
Needles Point -	3
* Yarmouth - -	5
Calbourn - -	6
Swainſton - -	2
* Newport - -	4
	35½

* Vide Preface, page xii.

The

The ſtreet of Cariſbrook is ſituated upon the banks of a rivulet, and lies immediately under the caſtle.

The church is ſtill large, though much reduced from its former ſize. The tower is lofty, of a good Gothic architecture, and is finiſhed with a turret, and four ſlender pinnacles: it appears to be of the age of the early Edwards.

The caſtle has been enlarged and extended at different periods, but, perhaps, no part is older than the Norman Conqueſt, as the high keep, or ſort of citadel, which appears to be the moſt ancient ſtructure, was not in uſe before that time. The outward, or the lateſt fortifications, are ſaid to have been added by Queen Elizabeth; military architecture began at that period to be underſtood, though from the ſtructure of theſe fortifications, it appears to have been then in its infancy. The walls

and

and baſtions are perfect in many places, which may be well ſurveyed by a walk or ride, round the circumference of the caſtle.

The apartments in the caſtle are large and well proportioned; the upper have coved cielings; they were improved and made habitable by the Governor, Lord Cutts, about the year 1700, but, ſince that time, they have been much neglected, till the preſent Governor, Mr. Orde, has lately rendered them a ſuitable reſidence for the honorable and profitable office, which he fills with ſo much credit to himſelf and ſatisfaction to the Iſlanders. The well is the greateſt curioſity within the walls of the caſtle, it is 200 feet in depth, and produces, in the drieſt ſeaſons, water of the pureſt quality. It is common for ſtrangers to drop a pin into this well, the depth and echoing vault of which reverberates a ſound, when

the pin touches the water, that is really aſtoniſhing. It is alſo common to drop a lighted ſheet of brown paper into the well, when the reaction of the air beneath, upon that which is rarified by the flame of the paper, keeps it ſomewhat buoyant, and makes it deſcend in ſo ſlow and ſpiral a direction, that the whole cavity of the well becomes diſcernible, till the fire is extinguiſhed in the water below.

Leaving the caſtle on our left hand, we traverſed an agreeable valley, which is the only paſs, except at Newport and Freſhwater, that can be traced between the high range of hills, which interſects the iſland into two nearly equal parts, and which are extended from the town of Brading, to the high point above the Needle rocks. Two or three rich farms lie in this narrow vale, at the end of which is the pariſh ſtreet of Shorwell, and adjoining to it ſtands North Court.

Court. This is a large antient houſe, and was erected in the early part of the reign of James I. The eaſt front ſtill maintains its original purity, and is built with a ſmooth and durable ſtone, that is now rarely to be met with in the inſular quarries. The ſquare projecting windows; the caſements pendent on their ſtone mullions; the ſeated porch, and gable-end roof, give this ſide of the building a venerable and not unpleaſing appearance. The houſe has been, for many years, inhabited by Mr. Bull, who has made the apartments within, as convenient and comfortable, as the outward front is reſpectable, and who ſtrictly keeps up the primitive hoſpitality of the age, in which the manſion was erected, and with a taſte, that was unknown till the preſent times.

The houſe is ſurrounded by hills, naked, but not uncultivated, nor unfruitful: how-

ever, a large grove of trees, probably coeval with the building, affords ſhelter and ſhade to the garden walks; a partial view of the Engliſh channel opens from one of the higher ſeats, which I ſhould ſcarcely have noticed, if we had not enjoyed the fortunate moment of viewing from it the uncommon proſpect of twenty ſhips of the line, with every ſail ſpread, and moving before us, with an eaſy gale of wind, within the diſtance of five miles from the ſhore.

The village of Brixton, or as it is pronounced by the natives, Briſeton, is clean and populous: its church has a ſhort ſtone ſpire upon a low tower, which form is alſo followed in the architecture of thoſe at Shorwell and Mottiſtone. We paſſed through the latter village, and from Brook, in which is a gentleman's houſe, formerly belonging to the Boweſmans, we began to aſcend, and leaving its diminutive church

on

on our right hand, ſlowly arrived at the upper part of Brook Down. From hence we looked back upon the few miles that we had lately paſſed over, and admired the fertility of the four pariſhes of Shorwell, Brixton, Mottiſtone, and Brook, the lands of which are ſheltered by the high downs from the north, and which, from that circumſtance, and their uninterrupted expoſition to the meridian ſun, receive a more genial warmth, than the Britiſh latitudes are naturally entitled to. Excluſive of this advantage, theſe pariſhes contain the beſt corn lands in the iſland. The fields are large and well incloſed with quickſet fences, but ſcarcely a tree is to be ſeen in the hedges, that can afford ſhade to the fly-teazed cattle during the ſummer heats, or ſhelter from the impetuous fury of the winter's ſtorm.

Here is little therefore to entertain the eye

eye of the caſual paſſenger, but extenſive fields and a boundleſs expanſe of ocean. The induſtrious huſbandman, however, thinks this want of beauty well compenſated by a perpetual ſupply of the fineſt water, and by the great abundance of corn-ricks, which, ſurrounding and adorning their farm-houſes, are ſo accurately formed into an oval ſhape, and ſo cloſely thatched with their own ſtrong and unthraſhed ſtraw, that they ſeem to have been modelled from the ſepulchral vaſes of Greece, or of antient Rome.

The higheſt elevation of this long hill is called Afton Down, and its extent of view may be conceived from its being 500 feet, in perpendicular height, above the ſea level. The proſpect from it reaches almoſt around the whole iſland, and far beyond the oppoſite parts of Hampſhire, farther indeed, than the beſt eye can command.

The

The clifts of the iſle of Purbeck are diſtinctly viſible from it, but an unvapoured atmoſphere is neceſſary to mark thoſe of the iſle of Portland, with the ſame preciſion.

An eaſy deſcent, of the continuance of two miles, brought us to the ſhore of Freſhwater Gate, where we found a comfortable little inn, with decent accommodations, good port wine, and, what is uncommon in the Iſle of Wight, a rational bill.

Towards the end of this long deſcent is a clump of many tumuli or barrows, the veſtiges of an ancient battle. A few of ſuch barrows are to be found on the tops of ſome of the hills in the iſland, but it is remarkable, that there ſhould not be the leaſt appearance of any old camp or intrenchment, throughout the whole country. I have ſearched for ſuch remains, where the

the name of a farm or an hamlet ſeemed to indicate the probability of meeting with them, but it was always to no purpoſe.

The inn is ſituated cloſe to the high-water mark, upon a low bank of pebbles, of no great extent, but of uncommon ſingularity. This pebbly bank is no more than a narrow iſthmus, of ſixty or ſeventy yards in width, that ſeparates the ocean from the ſpring-head of the Yarmouth river, and over which, in high ſpring tides, or ſouth-weſterly gales of wind, the ſea is frequently intermixed with the Freſh-water brook, and is hurried impetuouſly to join the oppoſite ſea at Yarmouth, with its tremendous inundation. Of this we were informed, though it appeared ſufficiently credible to us, as not a plant or a weed was to be ſeen among the ſtony materials, which, by a perpetual colliſion, were worn to a ſmooth and poliſhed rotundity.

This

This bank is about two hundred yards in length, and connects the riſing precipices of this bold ſhore, which form the romantic ſcenery of Freſhwater Bay. On the weſt ſide, between two and three hundred yards from the inn, an immenſe natural cavern opens its wide mouth to the Engliſh Channel. The entrance of it is a rugged ſegment of a large circle, the ſpan of which may be thirty-five feet, and the height twenty, and it penetrates under the impending cliff, for perhaps as many yards. It muſt be obſerved, that this cavern cannot be approached except at low water, and even then, ſome ladies may find the walk unpleaſant for their tender and unſteady feet, as it is neceſſary, in order to avoid the pits of water left by the ebbing tide, to croſs, by unequal ſteps, from one ſlippery cragg to another, many of which are looſe, and even moveable by the light-

eſt preſſure. A boat may introduce company into the cave, when the water is high, and the ſea calm and ſmooth, but if the water ſhould be rough, few people would venture into it, as a moderate gale of wind beats, into its deep receſs, with great violence.

The detached craggs near the cavern, and the perpendicular precipice above it, which extends and raiſes itſelf for ſome miles, with a continued progreſs of elevation, to the extreme point of the iſland, offer a noble ſubject for the pencil; while, on the other ſide of the bay, three huge and lofty rocks, iſolated, by time and ſtorms, from the gravelly cliffs, and now rearing themſelves from the ſea; and the extenſive line of the rough ſhores of Mottiſtone, Brixton and Shorwell, even to St. Catherine's Hill, preſent a ſuitable companion to it.

Both

Both theſe views are to be found in Sir Richard Worſley's Hiſtory of the Iſle of Wight, they are accurately finiſhed, and boldly engraven, and may be conſidered as two of the beſt plates in the book, many of which, I am ſorry to obſerve, inſtead of adorning, diſgrace that work.

It is ſaid, that there was formerly, a plan for making a communication from Freſhwater Gate to Yarmouth, by removing the iſthmus; but though it would be certainly practicable, it is not very apparent, of what utility ſuch an operation would be either to commerce or ſecurity.

Strangers are generally conducted by their guides to the Light-houſe, on the moſt weſtern and higheſt part of theſe Freſhwater Cliffs. This ſpot is three miles diſtant from the Gate, and the return from it being three miles, it may be an object of ſome conſideration, whether time may ad-

mit of extending the tour of this day ſo far. The proſpect from it is, in the higheſt degree, magnificent, and excluſive of what may be ſeen from Afton Down, the Needles, from below, open and preſent their rugged tops, like the jagged grinders of a ſtupendous jaw, to the exalted ſpectator. But though this ſpot is one hundred feet higher than the ſummit of the before-mentioned Down, yet, when it is conſidered that the views from Afton extend farther than the beſt eye can reach, perhaps the paſſenger may be content with what he has already ſeen, and prudently diſpenſe with the toiling again from the ſea-level to the height of ſix hundred feet, to view only a more extenſive horizon. But theſe hints are intended for thoſe, who may not have ſufficient time for the undertaking, and who may wiſh to return to their head quarters at a reaſonable hour.

We

We found more trees and ſmall groves in the pariſh of Freſhwater, than I had expected from the ſituation of this little peninſula; but they do not thrive or flouriſh, like the rich woods on the eaſt ſide of the iſland, and the cloſe ſurrounding ſea demands their leaves much earlier in the vallies and receſſes of Freſhwater, than in the more level country of Ryde or of Brading. However, many pleaſant ſpots are to be found in this ſequeſtered pariſh, and the little hamlet of Norton exhibits ſome rural cottages, that have lately been erected, with more expence, indeed, than taſte.

Yarmouth is a ſmall borough town. The inn is a great houſe, being once the reſidence of Lord Holmes, who was Governor of the iſland in 1763; but it is not ſo properly furniſhed, or accommodated, as the ſize of the apartments ſeems to require, or as

as the traveller might, from its outward appearance, expect.

The caſtle of Yarmouth was erected at the ſame period as that at Cowes. It is now a uſeleſs building, but affords a comfortable ſinecure to the perſon who may be fortunate enough to be appointed its Captain.

The road now paſſes, through open fields, and innumerable gates, to the pariſh of Calbourne, where ſome fine elms attract one's notice, while the Parſonage Houſe, and an old ſeat of the Holmes', enliven the oppoſite ſides of its little ſtreet.

Swainſton has been noticed in a ride from Cowes at page 6; but I ſhall here obſerve, that the fineſt engraving in the Hiſtory of the Iſle of Wight, repreſents this ſeat of the Barringtons, though, I muſt own, that I could not diſcover the ſpot, from

from which the place could appear to ſo much advantage, as in the plate.

We now ſoon joined our morning track under the Caſtle of Cariſbrook, and arrived at Newport. The reader will perceive, that the principal, and almoſt the ſole object of this day's excurſion, is the Freſh-water Gate, which is certainly one of the firſt things in the iſland; but, if any one ſhould ſuppoſe, that the circuit deſcribed is too long for a ſingle purſuit, he may return, by the ſhorteſt road, to Newport from Freſhwater, omit the ride over the cliffs, and be contented with a diſtant view of the town of Yarmouth.

THE

SECOND DAY's EXCURSION.

	MILES.
FROM Newport to Wootton Bridge -	4
Binſted Parſonage	3
* Ryde - - - - -	2
St. John's - - - -	1
The Priory - - -	3
St. Helen's Green -	1
* Brading - - - -	4
Sandham Heath -	3
Brading Down -	3½
Aſhey Sea-Mark -	1½
* Newport - - - -	5
	31

Upon

Upon the point of a hill, called Fern-hill, before we deſcend to Wootton Bridge, is a houſe built by Mr. Orde, the preſent Governor of the iſland. It appears to have been erected upon the plan of a church; a lofty and handſome tower riſes from one end, with a large Gothic window near its baſe, while a ſingle room annexed to the other end, of an inferior height and breadth to the reſt of the building, denotes the chancel of it.

The view from it is rich and extenſive, and commands a long reach of woods, of more than a thouſand acres, while the Creek of Wootton may be traced, by the eye, to the ſea ſhore, where the proſpect over the ſhips of the Mother Bank and Spithead is bounded by the oppoſite coaſt. The beſt approach to the houſe begins at Wootton Bridge, and is carried up the verdant aſcent with much taſte and judgment.

What is called Wootton Bridge, is a long, narrow cauſeway, more than three hundred yards in length, over which the high road paſſes from Newport to Ryde, and which, till lately, when there was no railing to it, was very terrific to the travelling ſtranger.

The danger is not, even now, entirely removed; for the hatches of the mill, placed about midway on this paſs, inſtead of being drawn up within the mill, or perpendicularly againſt the outſide of it, while it is grinding, project obliquely about two feet over, and above the road, which in this part is not more than nine feet wide. The danger is with the more difficulty to be guarded againſt, as, when the mill is ſtopt, there is no appearance of a hatch above the ſurface of the road.

A family had almoſt fatally experienced, two years ſince, this great nuiſance; for the coachman,

coachman, obſerving a plain level, between the mill and the railing, in the day-time, was not aware, on his return by night, of the projection of the hatches, and conſequently, drove violently againſt them, which threw the coach on the oppoſite rails, from whence, its fall being for a ſhort time broken, it was laid flat, and covered the whole of the road.

The carriage, of courſe, was much damaged; but, fortunately, tho' there were ſix perſons in it, not one was materially injured.

It is to be hoped, that this public nuiſance may be removed; or, at leaſt, that the unwary paſſenger may be apprized of his peril, by ſome light to direct him, when the hatches are projected, and the mill is working.

This cauſeway was erected acroſs the creek, for the purpoſe of penning back the

tides, which, by the means of a ſtrong ſluice and floodgate, placed in its quickeſt current, receives and retains the full flow of the ſea. A few hours after the ebb commences, the return of this water ſerves to work the corn mill above noticed; the pool is again ſupplied by the following tide.

The Pond, as it is called, though it may at high water, well deſerve the appellation of a Lake, runs ſomething more than a mile from Wootton Bridge, by a ſerpentine courſe, up into the country. The mouth of the creek on the ſhore, is about the ſame diſtance from below the bridge.

My curioſity induced me to explore the fartheſt receſs of this broad and extenſive piece of water, and I hired, at the bridge, a ſmall flat-bottomed boat for the occaſion.

At my firſt embarking, the ſloping declivities on each ſide, and, particularly, on the lawn

lawn which deſcends from Mr. Orde's houſe, abound with ſeveral natural groups of trees.

A ſmaller creek of water winding round a jutting point of this lawn, loſing itſelf in a little coppice, adds much to the beauty of this ſcene. About half a mile higher, the banks of the water begin to be contracted into a width of about 150 feet, and continue of that breadth, till it receives a brook which riſes in Combley wood, and occaſionally deſcends in a rapid torrent, under Black Bridge, near Haven Street, and not more than a quarter of a mile from the uppermoſt part of the pool.

The whole of this contracted channel wears a ſolemn gloom; and its winding courſe quickly conveyed me into a region of the thickeſt ſhade, where antient and decayed oaks expoſed their half naked roots from both its banks, while their low and

ſpreading

ſpreading branches impended over and darkened the water beneath them. The gentle acclivities, alſo, on all ſides are covered with coppices and woods, as far as the eye could reach from the boat. It will be proper to obſerve, that this little voyage can only be undertaken while the pool is full, as even then, the water is very ſhallow; but when the water is expended by the working of the mill, the current exhibits only a ſorry brook, meandring through a broad expanſe of oozy and offenſive mud.

The reader may form an idea of the uncommon ſhallowneſs of this water, when he is informed, that, though it covers the ſpace of one hundred acres, it is all conſumed in the ſpace of five hours, by the operations of a ſingle mill. The banks of the creek below the bridge, and even of its mouth, are partially covered with coppices and timber.

From Wootton Bridge we ſoon entered a beautiful wood, called Fireſtone, part of the extenſive woods of Quarr, through which the road continues for more than a mile, and ends at a pleaſant farm, called Ninham Pond. The Abbey of Quarr, which lies about half a mile from this road on the left hand, has been deſcribed at page 9.

Soon after, a ſhort deviation from the high road leads to the parſonage at Binſted. This is a ſmall, thatched, hermitage-like cottage, placed in a moſt retired ſituation. The little lawn of graſs before it is almoſt ſurrounded with woods, through which deſcending viſtas have been cut, and open various and beautiful views of the water below, and of the oppoſite coaſt.

The harmony of this delightful ſpot is perhaps injured by the many white benches and tables, which croud the little plat: this deſtroys its true character of privacy and ſimplicity,

ſimplicity, and too much conveys the idea of its being a public tea-houſe. But, fortunately, how eaſily may this objection be remedied!

A ſteep and high bank lies between the parſonage and the ſea, down which a winding path is made, through a thicket of thorns and briars, to its ſhore.

If a company have leiſure and inclination, they may viſit the ruins of Quarr Abbey, by a walk of half a mile, through the wood, from Binſted, though I muſt hint, that their time will be ſufficiently employed this day, without that digreſſion. The little church of Binſted adjoins to the orchard of the parſonage. The ſouth door is of Norman architecture: the north entrance, which was of the ſame age, has been cloſed up for ſome centuries, and over it is what the vulgar call the idol. This is no more than a large prepoſterous figure, ſitting naked,

naked, which was, in the early and rude ages, conſidered as ornamental to ſome part of the building, and which abſurd and barbarous taſte actually continued in this country, till the reign of Henry VII. when ſuch ornaments, as no one could underſtand or explain, were called hieroglyphics.

We now paſſed over the broad ſurface of a ſuperficial quarry, which has been long diſuſed, but from which, the Norman part of the Cathedral of Wincheſter was ſupplied with its ſtone.

In the ſhort ſpace between Binſtead and Ryde, a few delightful views open, through the rich groves and timbered hedgerows, to Spithead and the oppoſite coaſt, which muſt arreſt the traveller's attention.

Ryde is a populous village, and the principal thoroughfare from the Iſland to Portſmouth. It has two tolerable inns, with chaiſes and whiſkies; many decent lodg-

ings are alſo to be hired in the place; and decked veſſels, or boats, may be engaged on its quay, at ten minutes notice. The bathing here is not ſo good as at Cowes, as it is confined, by the flatneſs of the ſhore, to about four hours each tide; this occaſions the proper time of bathing to vary every day. But the machine may always be employed for two hours each tide, between ſix o'clock in the morning, and three in the afternoon. While we made a pauſe at this village, we were recommended to a wooden bench, about a hundred yards below the inn.

We had hitherto been amuſed, in this morning's ride, with ſome tranſient and partial views of Spithead, and of other parts of the ſea, which runs between the Iſle of Wight and the coaſt of Hampſhire: but from this commanding ſeat, a full, extended, and complete proſpect of the whole length

length of Spithead, and of every anchored ſhip therein, and of the towns of Goſport and Portſmouth, burſt ſuddenly and diſtinctly upon our enraptured ſight. The field of nearly twelve acres, at the upper end of which this ſeat is fixed, divides the upper village of Ryde from the lower. This field is backed, and flanked on the weſt ſide, with a thick grove of lofty and flouriſhing elms, that deſcend from the bench even to the water's edge, with the ſame gentle declivity as the field itſelf, the waving declination of which could ſcarcely be improved, by the ingenuity of the moſt faſhionable artiſt. It is a ſingular circumſtance, that, though this field divides two parts of a populous village, yet the upper village is concealed from it, by a ſtrong ſhade; while the lower village is almoſt overlooked, from its being ſituated cloſe to the water, and under a ſteep bank, at the

extremity of the field. A lodging-houſe was, a few years ſince, built in the field, near this bench, the windows of which command, without interruption, the whole view. It has lately been purchaſed and improved by a gentleman; and the houſe is now fortunately and conſpicuouſly introduced in the juſtly celebrated *Panorama* of Spithead.

As it was not the time of high water, we drove along the ſhore, through Lower Ryde, to a houſe of Dr. Walker, called Apley, which is charmingly placed on the high and woody margin of the ſea bank, and from thence aſcended, through two or three beautiful meadows, to the common road that leads from Ryde to St. Helen's.

Part of the pales that ſurround St. John's were cloſe on our right hand; this houſe of St. John's was built by the late General Amherſt, and, though ſmall, is of an elegant

gant architecture; it ſtands on a lofty eminence, and in the centre of a large, ſloping lawn, bounded by trees on every ſide: it overlooks the houſe of Apley, which lies between it and the water, and which is ſo much below St. John's, that the high trees, which form the back ground of Apley, do not intercept the views of Spithead and Portſmouth, from the windows of St. John's. This delightful ſpot is now tenanted and inhabited by the Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer.

At Nettleſtone, about an hundred yards from the high road, but not viſible from it, ſtands an elegant box of Mr. Henry Oglander, who has, not improperly, given it the name of Fairy Hill. It is a *ferme ornée*, the fields of which are diſpoſed in the happieſt manner, and are all dreſſed with the neatneſs of a garden. The ſea-

views,

views, from the houſe, are ſimilar to thoſe of St. John's.

The lane, near the gate of Fairy Hill, leads to a place called Seagrove, ſomething more than a quarter of a mile from it. The excurſion to it may, probably, delay the traveller too much in the route of this day, but of this he himſelf muſt be the judge.

A gentleman, a few years ſince, had intended to build a large houſe on this delicious ſpot; but as he lived only to ſee the ſtables completed, theſe are now fitted up as a dwelling-houſe, with tenements, and ſolely inhabited by poor families. No name could be better adapted to this ſituation than that of Seagrove.

The oaks and the elms riſe to a great height, and flouriſh moſt luxuriantly: they abound in every part of a large and beautiful lawn, and nature has diſpoſed them

in

in the moſt pleaſing groups, while the ſwelling and natural inequalities of the ground defy the aſſiſtance of art to improve them. The ſhore, of the ſofteſt and fineſt ſand, is not more than two hundred yards from the tenements, which are built on the higheſt ſpot of the lawn, and the windows of which command all the views that are to be ſeen from St. John's or Fairy Hill, either over the timber riſing from the lowermoſt land, or between the ſtems of thoſe trees which ſhade the higheſt.

A deep and wide dale, the ſides of which are covered with a thick wood, deſcends, from the ſouth-eaſt end of theſe tenements, to the ſhore, where even the beach is overſhadowed by its exuberant foliage.

Whether it aroſe from my ſeeing Seagrove almoſt in a natural ſtate, or whether from my not being prepared to expect ſo much beauty in ſuch a ſequeſtered ſpot, that

that my attention ſhould be uncommonly affixed to it, I cannot ſay; but I can ſcarcely ſuppoſe, that ſuch prejudices could incline me to be of opinion, that Seagrove is the moſt capital ſituation for a houſe, of all the places in the iſland, unleſs it deſerved a high degree of pre-eminence.

If the above deſcription ſhould invite any one to viſit Seagrove, I ſhould recommend him to walk from thence to the Priory, which is not a mile diſtant, and to ſend his carriage round, with inſtructions to the gardener of the Priory, to meet him in his path. By theſe means, the leaſt time poſſible will be loſt.

The approach towards the priory from the high road, which is through large and open fields, by no means indicates the beauty of its ſcite, nor does the ſhort avenue of old elms, having the dull front of a ſtone barn at the end of it, nor the previ-

ous

ous entrance into a farm-yard, prepoſſeſs the traveller in favour of a place, that is ſo cloſely adjoining to it. But upon entering the gardens, the country behind them, the rugged barn, and the farm-yard, are inſtantly forgotten.

The Priory Houſe has lately been much enlarged and improved by the proprietor, Mr. Juſtice Groſe: it ſtands at the head of a very ſpacious lawn, that gently declines from the houſe to the brink of a high ridge, the ſteep bank of which is covered with wood down to the high water's edge. The moſt rural walks are cut along the length of this ſylvan bank, which are kept in the neateſt preſervation. They are of unequal breadths, according as the ſteepneſs of the ridge would admit, though we were, now and then, unexpectedly ſurprized with a ſhady lawn, where we thought that Nature muſt have forbidden ſuch a variety. A few

benches and buildings are, here and there, erected, for the refreſhment of the wearied walker, in thoſe ſpots, where the views open to the greateſt advantage---to Spithead and Portſmouth---to St. Helen's Road---or to the Suſſex coaſt, where they are, at length, loſt, in the boundleſs horizon of the eaſt.

The Watch-houſe Point is at ſome diſtance from the gardens, and unconnected with them, except by a pleaſant walk thro' a field, and along the margin of the wooded ſlope. The whole of this ſcenery is nearly three quarters of a mile in length; but, notwithſtanding, I muſt recommend a deſcent to the white-ſanded ſhore, from whence the whole outline of this beautiful ground is clearly diſcernible.

We now proceeded over the ſmooth fed verdure, and amid the numerous cottages of St. Helen's Green; a little below which ſtands

ſtands the ruined tower of its old church, ſtill ſtruggling againſt the further encroachments of the ſea, which, in the beginning of this century, had treſpaſſed ſo much upon its church-yard, as to oblige the inhabitants to build a new church, a mile higher within land, and near the center of the pariſh. The ruin has been lately enlarged, and whitened, and now ſerves as a ſea-mark. We looked down upon the harbour of Brading, from St. Helen's Green, and coaſted along in view of that great baſon, and of the low peninſula of Bimbridge on the oppoſite ſide, till we arrived near the little town of Brading. A farm-houſe, called Hill, riſes conſpicuouſly on the right-hand of this road, from the ſummit of a rich and woody ſlope, and commands every part of this proſpect.

The harbour of Brading, at high-water, covers more than one hundred acres, and

forms a grand lake almoſt up to Brading. But, at low-water, the ſcene is miſerably changed, and now becoming neither land nor water, it exhibits a mournful expanſe of the worſe coloured dreary mire. Some neat ſhops, and decent lodging-houſes, are to be found in Brading. Its church is large, and has a handſome tower and ſteeple; but though it claims the merit of being the moſt antient religious foundation in the iſland, no part of the preſent building, tho' antient, ſhews marks of ſuch high antiquity.

We had hitherto purſued our road by pleaſant lanes, and over ſhady commons, and through a country ſo richly wooded, and ſo variegated with hills and dales, that, perhaps, ſuch a ride of fourteen miles (from Wootton Bridge to Brading) eſpecially when we add to it the views of the ſea as well as of the land, is no where elſe to be found.

As

As we approached towards Sandown Fort, the country wears a different complexion, from what it had ſhewn on the north ſide of Brading; for now the Britiſh Channel began to open upon us, and after paſſing the village of Sandown, the blaſting effects of the ſea were ſtrongly marked upon every tree and every buſh.

The Fort of Sandown is a regular quadrangular fortification, with a baſtion at each angle, and is ſurrounded with a wet foſſe. This is the only fort of any conſequence in the iſland, it is therefore kept in good repair, and is properly manned. It was originally erected, for the prevention of an enemy's landing on the flat beach, the greateſt part of which is commanded by the guns of the fort.

At a little diſtance from this fort, and where the ſhore begins to riſe to a low terrace, Mr. Wilkes has lately erected, in the garden

garden of a cottage which he purchaſed, ſome rooms, detached from the houſe and from each other, with the floor-cloth manufactory of Knightſbridge. Two of theſe rooms are large, well-proportioned, and fitted up in an expenſive and elegant ſtile; the other building contains two bedchambers. The intermediate ſpace between them, is, in one place, a little poliſhed orchard; and in another, a cloſe grove of ſhort ſtunted trees, that reſemble, both in their ſize and number, a paſtoral ſcene on the ſtage of a play-houſe.

The aſpect of one of the great rooms opens to the ocean, and takes in the whole of Sandown Bay; a grand and noble object! formed by the chalky cliffs of Culver on the eaſt; and, on the weſt, by the craggy rocks of the mountainous point of Dunnoſe, ſix miles diſtant from each other.

The other building fronts to the north,

and

opens to the ſhade of the dwarf apple-trees of the orchard.

The houſe, in which the family reſides, is ſmall, and at a little diſtance from theſe whimſical, though not unpleaſing erections, which are in reality the ſummer-houſes of the garden. I ought to notice a grand covered bench, formed within the bank, and which opens, from the bottom of the ſlope, upon a level with the bay and the ocean.

This place is called Sandham Heath, and its environs are covered with fern and furze.

Sandham Heath is, perhaps, more viſited than any other ſpot in the iſland, and ſome ladies have, moſt provokingly, preferred it to the romantic cottages of the Undercliff, and to the luxuriant richneſs of the neighbourhood of Ryde. But here are ſome fine prints and ſome beautiful china, and among

among the former, *Des Bijoux indiſcrets, et des autres figures, qui parlent trop clairement.*

Though the chine of Shanklin is leſs than three miles from Sandham Heath, yet, as the tour of this day may appear ſufficiently long, I ſhall reſerve that place for the following tour, and direct the party to return to within a quarter of a mile of Brading, as I ſhould wiſh to conduct them over the delightful downs, that ariſe between that town and Newport. A man muſt be void of all pretenſions to taſte, that will not be inclined to make more than one ſtop, in the aſcent of Brading Down, and to trace his road, through the ſingular variety of country, that has been paſſed in a ride of a few hours. But I ſhall not detain my reader with any particular deſcription, till I have placed him at the ſea-mark on Aſhey Down. I muſt not, however, omit

to

to point out to him, juſt before he enters upon Aſhey Down, the old and reſpectable manſion of Mr. Biſſet, at Knighton, which exhibits its pictureſque ſcite from below, deeply emboſomed in well-timbered woods, that riſe on the eaſt and weſt ſides, in ſteep acclivities to a height almoſt equal to the Down.

The ſea-mark is a lofty triangular pyramid of ſtone; it was erected by Government, in the year 1735, and was deſignedly left unfiniſhed, the apex appearing to have been obliquely cut off. This pyramid is viſible from every elevated ſpot in the iſland, and is a direction to the ſailor, from almoſt all the ſurrounding ſeas. It muſt therefore appear unneceſſary to attempt the deſcription of the great extent of view from it; for, as Aſhey Down is conſpicuous from every ſide of the horizon, ſo the whole ho-

rizon muſt be reciprocally comprehended within the view from the pyramid.

I ſhall therefore confine myſelf to marking out thoſe nearer objects, which the eye, unaſſiſted with glaſſes, may eaſily command.

The harbour of Brading---the peninſula of Bimbridge----the rich woods around Nunwell, and their continuation to Wootton Bridge, above which the tower of Mr. Orde's houſe offers its prominent feature, are all overlooked on the eaſt and north ſide: while the broad and fertile vale of Newchurch and Arreton, extending to the mountainous hills of Shanklin, Wroxall, Week and St. Catherine's, the ſteep precipices of which, on their oppoſite ſides, bound, what is called the Undercliff, court the eye to the ſouthward. A leſs pleaſant, though more extenſive view opens to the weſtward, which paſſes over the dreary heath

heath of Parkhurſt Foreſt, and is loſt on the naked downs of Brixton, Afton and the Freſhwater Cliffs.

The road paſſes from this pyramid, for nearly three miles, along the ridge of a continuation of Downs, which derive their names from the pariſhes to which they belong, and diſcloſes the country, on each ſide, in a pleaſing variety of intereſting points of view, till it enters a lane, which, in its regular deſcent to Newport, ſhews that town and the caſtle of Cariſbrook, with part of the river from Newport to Cowes, to great advantage.

THE

THIRD DAY's EXCURSION.

	MILES.
FROM Newport to Standen - -	1½
Pidford - - -	1½
* Niton - - -	6
St. Lawrence -	3½
* Steephill - -	1
St. Boniface -	2
* Shanklin - -	3
Arreton - - -	6
St. George's Down	2
* Newport - -	2
	28½

Oppoſite

Oppoſite Standen houſe and on the other ſide of the Medine, or Newport river, which here, already, is no more than a little brook, though it is navigable from Cowes to Newport bridge, a rich wood opens to the road; and ſoon after the ſtone houſe of Gatcombe, one of the ſeats of the Worſley family, is very conſpicuous from that ſide of the water. The tower of an adjoining church, juſt ſhewing its top and pinnacles, from above the grove in which it is embo-ſomed---the high knolls of timber, that back and flank the building, and a range of coppice, that covers the ſteep precipice of a lofty hill on the ſouth ſide, ſufficiently mark out the beautiful ſituation of Gat-combe houſe.

Nothing appeared intereſting in the reſt of the road towards Niton, except the gra-dual expanſe of St. Catherine's Hill, the height

height and baſe of which muſt command attention.

The pariſh of Godſhill, the tower of which is built on the higheſt knoll of the vale---the obeliſk in the park of Apuldurcombe---and the pariſh of Whitwell lay on our left hand, and the two former objects were conſpicuouſly viſible, till we began to deſcend to the pariſh of Niton.

This place is diſtinguiſhed by the name of Crab Niton, from the plenty of that fiſh on this coaſt. Its ſituation has ſomething romantic, as it lies at the eaſtern foot of St. Catherine's Hill, from which the deſcent to the ſtreet is rough and rapid. It does not, however lie on the ſhore, as, perhaps, the houſes may be more than 300 feet in perpendicular height above the ſea, which is not viſible from the ſtreet, and from which they are a full mile diſtant. Small parties

parties may either dine or ſleep at the inn at Niton.

Moving from Niton, we ſoon deſcended by an oblique road on the ſide of the rocks, to what is called the Undercliff. If the mind of any perſon can remain tranquil on the firſt view of this wonderful country, or if he can gaze with indifference on the ſublime ſcene above and below him, I do not envy the cool phlegm of his conſtitution, but I ſhould adviſe him, to confine his future airings to the level and duſty roads that ſurround our metropolis.

From this deſcent ſeveral ſmall, detached and pictureſque farm-houſes opened to our view, and among others, one called Mirables, poſſibly from Mirabilis, the little environs of which are diſtinguiſhed by green gates. This houſe has lately been purchaſed by a Mr. Arnold of Northamptonſhire, who has fitted it up for his ſummer's reſidence;

dence; but it ſtands ſo boldly expoſed to the ocean, and it is ſo barren of ſhade, that the heat muſt be like that of a ſcorching furnace in the ſummer, while the hurricanes of wind and rain, in the winter, muſt even penetrate through it's walls and windows.

When I reflect upon the various houſes, that have been erected upon whimſical and capricious plans---and when I have ſeen ſome, founded upon the inconvenient deſigns of a Gothic College, others reſembling a church, with its tower and chancel---and one other, within view of this iſland, upon the ſtill more extravagant plan of a Turkiſh encampment; where the bed-chambers and offices ſtart up from the earth, in a diviſion of ſeparate tents, at a conſiderable diſtance from a lofty tower of ſeveral ſtages, of itſelf a beautiful building, and between which a long, dark and ſubterraneous paſſage forms a diſmal communication

of

of the apartments allotted for the day, with thoſe appropriated for the night; it has been matter of ſurprize to me, that no eccentric genius has ever conceived the idea of imitating the deſigns and elevation of the ſtern part of a ſhip of war: which, from the lowneſs of the cabins, and the little loſs of ſpace in the arrangement of its numerous apartments, would be capable of containing a large family, and might be erected at a much leſs expence than many of the modern and faſhionable *cottages*. No ſpot could be more properly appropriated for the foundation of ſuch an edifice, than ſeveral of the projecting rocks, on the coaſts of this undercliff, where it might be ſo happily placed, that the views from the cabins ſhould, if deſired, be actually confined to the Britiſh Channel, while thoſe of the outward galleries, ſhould embrace the whole length, and command every point, of the coaſt.

Add to this, that notwithſtanding the apparent expoſure of our ſhip,

> The lanes and alleys green,
> Dingles, and buſhy dells of theſe wild rocks,
> And all the boſky bourns from ſide to ſide,
> Might be our daily walk.
>
> MILTON.

This undercliff properly begins at a ſmall houſe, called Knowles, about a mile farther weſtward, which is placed on the low ſouthernmoſt point of the iſland, under the hill of St. Catherine's. From this houſe there is no further progreſs, as it is backed by ſuch impending craggs and precipices, that any communication, on this ſide, with its neighbouring pariſh of Chale, is totally impracticable.

This ſequeſtered and unſociable ſpot, late the reſidence of Mr. Bradſhaw, whoſe melancholy, perhaps, was encouraged and increaſed by the horrible ſcenery around it,

ſeems

ſeems calculated only for ſolitude and contemplation. No vegetation appears among the huge fragments, ſeparated and fallen from the precipices of St. Catherine's---and ſuch violent ſeparations are not, even now, unfrequent, as may be viſible from their different degrees of increaſing disjunction from the parent mountain.

Knowles is rarely viſited, and I have not introduced it into the plan of this day, as the road to it from Niton, and its return, would cauſe an addition of three miles to the journey. The road to it is very good.

The diſtance from Knowles, to Bouchurch which is the eaſtern termination of the Undercliff, is nearly ſix miles, but they are ſuch miles as are not, for their ſingularity, perhaps, to be parallelled in the whole world.

Bold cliffs, low lands, or declining ſhores are the uſual boundaries of the ocean: but,

on this extravagant coaſt, a wall-like, rectilinear precipice of lofty rock extends itſelf for ſome miles in length, and at the diſtance of more than a mile from the ſea: in this interval of rock and water, coloſſal fragments of ſtone, torn or ſunk from the precipice, by ſome great convulſion of nature, are ſcattered below, in the moſt irregular confuſion. Theſe ſolid maſſes are of ſuch a ponderous magnitude, that they form high eminences of the moſt capricious ſhapes, while their intermediate ſpaces become deep vallies, in which houſes are built, and even aſhes and elms are ſeen to flouriſh, ſheltered from the ſtorms and the ſpray of the ſea, by the hoſpitable and lofty ſhades of the fragments. Every ſpot of this land, that can bear the impreſſion of a plough, is uncommonly fertile and well cultivated, but the fruitful patches are of all ſizes and figures, and the huge rocks, covered with briars,

briars, frequently ariſe from amidſt a polygon *encloſure* of two or three acres.

Some faint idea of this wonderful country may, perhaps, be conceived from the above deſcription, which, from the towering hills above, appears to the eye like a level plain; but which, when ſeen from the ſea, riſes like a ſeries of gigantic ſteps, that ſeem to lead from the cliffs of the ſhore, which are even there of great elevation, to the ſummit of the grand perpendicular wall. The houſes of St. Lawrence are interſperſed between theſe majeſtic ruins of nature, and its little diminutive church is erected upon one of its fragments, but which indeed, contains a ſurface ſufficient for the foundation of a cathedral.

The reader may now, probably, think me juſtified in my general aſſertion of the peculiarity of this Undercliff, as I can ſafely aver, that no ſuch country ever occurred

to

to my obſervation, nor do I recollect to have ſeen ſuch ever deſcribed. The whole road is perfectly ſafe and tolerably good, though frequently ſteep and ſtony.

Many freſh ſeparations from the precipice are viſible, and the ſpots, from whence they deſcended, ſignally correſpond to the forms of the huge ſtones below. Theſe are quite naked, and have neither mould nor colour upon them, while the others are covered and concealed with briars, thorns, and trees, in proportion to the centuries, that have elapſed ſince their original avulſion.

Near the church of St. Lawrence, Sir Richard Worſley has juſt completed a neat and elegant building, which though the roof be ſlated and the windows faſhed, the faſhion of the Iſle of Wight requires to be called a cottage. It ſtands, at a little diſtance, below the road, from whence a ſer-

pentine

pentine ſhady lane leads to it. Many natural groups of reſpectable elms are here diſperſed among the wide interſtices of the divided rocks---and many graſſy lawns wind their irregular paſſages amid theſe impenetrable barriers. One ſide of this cottage commands ſome partial views of the ocean, while the other opens to a circular, poliſhed, graſs-plat, which is cloſely environed with thick coppices, that have, for time immemorial, taken full poſſeſſion of the ſides and ſummits of theſe antient fragments. A ſhallow pellucid ſtream, juſt burſted from its chryſtal ſpring, and trilling through this little verdant mead, works its channel towards the ſea cliff, from whence it falls in a conſiderable caſcade on the ſhore. Surely, nature never combined ſuch a heterogeneous aſſemblage of her various features in ſo ſmall a compaſs before!

A vine-

A vineyard has lately been planted on an acre of this little demeſne, under the inſpection of a French *Vigneron*, and if a ſcorching climate alone were ſufficient to enſure its ſucceſs, there can be no doubt of it; but whether the ſpray, of the neighbouring ſea, may not blaſt the foliage of the vines, or whether the land may not be too moiſt and ſpungy for a plant, that naturally affects the drieſt ſoil, a few years experience will ultimately determine.

The novelty of a vineyard has, probably, attracted more company to St. Lawrence, than the pictureſque and romantic ſcenery around it, and, perhaps, more than is quite agreeable to the proprietor, for I was ſurprized, at a ſubſequent excurſion to it, to ſee a painted board, at the entrance, with the following words, "*The Sea Cottage is not ſhew'd*," from which I underſtood, that it was not to be ſeen. It is remarkable, that there

there ſhould be much the ſame forbiddance to the houſe at Appuldurcombe, and even to the road through the park; for though a ticket of admittance, for a particular day, is, occaſionally, granted by Sir Richard's ſteward at Newport, yet the application for it has been known to have been refuſed.

This want of attention to the inquiſitive traveller is, however, happily confined to Appuldurcombe, and St. Lawrence, for ſuch is the uncommon liberality of every other inhabitant of the Iſland, that ſtrangers are permitted to drive through their lawns, and even to their doors, with a conſciouſneſs of giving no offence.

If a company ſhould, however, be admitted to the purlieus of this delightful ſpot, I muſt recommend them to ſend a ſervant to Steephill, with directions to the gardener to meet them at a white gate, about midway between the cottages of St.

Lawrence and Steephill. We here entered upon a choice of the irregular lawns or natural terraces, which appear among the intervals of the fallen craggs, and continued our walk to the houſe of Steephill, of which we had a full view the whole way.

This cottage was built by the late Hans Stanley, and is now inhabited by Mr. Wilbraham Tollemache. The houſe itſelf is ſmall and of little conſequence: it is erected upon the ſummit of one of the diſmembered rocks, and perhaps upon the fourth or fifth, about halfway between the baſe of the precipice and the ſea-ſhore. Juſt before the windows of the weſt front, a beautiful ſpring of the moſt tranſparent water keeps a large ſtone baſon, in the form of a ſcallop ſhell, perpetually full: and from hence a long diſplay of this Undercliff, even to the little church of St. Lawrence, appears in its proper ſplendor. The rocks of Steephill have

have the ſame accompanyment of furze, fern, and coppices, as at St. Lawrence, but the trees are neither equal in ſize nor in verdure. The corn fields are of larger extent, and bear wonderful crops.

A few yards below, and immediately under this cottage, a little inn is ſituated on the brink of a narrow ledge, which commands a view of the channel, and where we found good accommodations for ourſelves and our horſes, and, the weather being favourable, we enjoyed our cold repaſt, under the ſpreading branches of a luxuriant fig-tree; and I muſt here obſerve, that it is worth a party's while to beſpeak this rural ſituation, as the rooms in the houſe are, in the higheſt degree, dark, melancholy, and diſmal. I ſhould have pointed out, that we paſſed through a little parterred flower garden, in leaving the cottage of Steephill, in which is a beautiful ſpecimen of Mr.

Coad's ſtone manufactory, both for workmanſhip, and durability. It is a large, noble vaſe upon a pedeſtal, after the antique, and though it has been erected in this coroſive expoſure, for upwards of fifteen years, yet it retains all its original ſharpneſs, and its alto-relievos, without any injury and without a blemiſh, which, probably, would not have been the caſe, if its ſculpture had been actually worked from a quarry.

After our dinner, we found time to walk over the hills, which roſe from below our ledge, and which, though devoid of the leaſt pretenſions to ſhade, had their merit of diſcloſing the long range of white cliffs, waſhed by the ſea, and of offering the face of the country in a new point of view. A powerful ſpring of water breaks out in the village of Steephill, and quickly winding its impetuous way down a ſlope of conſiderable height, and from thence meandring

to

to the brink of the ſea cliff, falls, in a little current of the pureſt element, perpendicularly upon the ſhore.

We could not but regret the waſte of ſo much fine water, which would be invaluable in many parts of the north ſide of the iſland, and particularly at Cowes, where I was reſident at the time this obvious remark occurred to me, and where even bad water is ſo ſcarce, that we not only bought it for every family uſe, but alſo for waſhing the wheels of our carriages, and we even paid a weekly acknowledgement for the permiſſion of watering our horſes, in what would be conſidered, on the oppoſite coaſt of Hampſhire, as a common horſe pond, for it had no rails to fence it, nor was it in an incloſed field.

Such ſometimes, though very rarely, has been the ſcarcity of water in the neighbourhood of Cowes, that the poor part of the inhabitants

inhabitants has been known to arreſt and empty the water-carts, on their paſſage to the town, in the ſame violent and outrageous manner, as if a famine ſhould compel them to plunder either meat or bread, for the immediate ſatisfaction of their craving neceſſity.

From Steephill the country begins to wear a more open and more cultivated appearance, but it is not, on this account, the leſs romantic; trees or coppices are now, indeed, rarely ſeen, and the precipitous wall ends at Steephill: but a rapid verdant ſlope, uſed only by the tread of ſheep, deſcends from a much higher elevation, and, in one ſpot, forces the road around it, to a very narrow and tremendous paſs, upon the brink of a mouldering cliff, where a few ragged rails ſeem ſcarcely ſufficient to protect the paſſenger from its danger, or at leaſt from the apprehenſion of it. The cleanly

cleanly cots, of the village of Ventnor, appeared to us, on our doubling this formidable point, the little cove of which is well known for its very romantic ſcenery and for a conſiderable caſcade of fine water, which after turning a corn mill, falls upon the beach, as well as for its crab and lobſter fiſhery, all of which are deſtined for the London markets.

The cottage of St. Boniface is a comfortable houſe, but its ſituation is very different from either of the others, already deſcribed, for it is not erected upon a ſummit, like that at Steephill; nor is it ſo cloſely confined between the fragments, as that at St. Lawrence: but it lies at the foot of a ſteep mountainous down, on a little level plain, and looks towards ſome long, regular ſlopes of rock naturally covered with thick coppices, and between which a few partial views of the ſea open to the houſe.

But

But a new ſcenery now, inſtantly, appears before us, of which, indeed, we had a ſufficient prelude, on our approach to St. Boniface; for now the ſmooth declivity of the down is abruptly changed to a dreary and romantic waſte of craggy, broken, and almoſt naked rocks, not of the magnitude of thoſe between St. Lawrence and Steephill, but ſuch as may be expected on the ſide of a mountain, where one great ſtone is checked in its progreſs, by the projection of another, that is firm enough to reſiſt its farther fall. This is the leading feature of the higher parts of the ſmall pariſh of Bouchurch; the lower parts conſiſt of the ſame ſtupendous fragments, as are ſeen in the other ſpots of the Undercliff, on ſome of which ariſe iſolated and natural pyramids of ſtone, the moſt remarkable of which is diſtinguiſhed by a flag ſtaff on its top.

The

The cots in the village are cleanly and neat, and are ſheltered in the winding vallies peculiar to this eccentric country, by the high eminences around them, and in which ſome elms of an extraordinary bulk ſtill continue to flouriſh. The pariſh church is a curious little building, encloſed with trees, and its antiquity is manifeſt from the Norman arch at its entrance.

We are now arrived at the eaſt extremity of this ſingular Undercliff, which is cloſed at Bouchurch, with an impaſſable promontory, in the ſame manner, as it is at Knowles, under the hill of St. Catherine's. We were therefore obliged to aſcend by a ſteep and zigzag road, made with much labour, through the rugged craggs of the declivity, to a high ſpot, at ſome diſtance from the projecting point of its promontory.

Though the following reflection may appear invidious, yet the notoriety of the fact

may, probably, juſtify me in remarking the peculiar occurrence of the fates of the three late proprietors and framers of the original cottages of the Undercliff, of Knowles, Steephill, and St. Boniface. That of Mr. Bradſhaw has been hinted at before; every one is acquainted with the cataſtrophe of Mr. Hans Stanley; nor could the charms of St. Boniface ſecure its late proprietor, from a ſimilar deſpondency of mind. But

" Fixed to no ſpot is happineſs ſincere,
" 'Tis no where to be found, or ev'ry where."

POPE.

Eſt hîc, eſt alabris.

But before I purſue my journey from this elevated ſituation, I ſhall juſt take notice of the communications, between this irregular coaſt and the country behind it. We have already deſcended to it from Niton---a mile farther ſhews us a ſteep bridle path, abruptly breaking from the higheſt precipice,

precipice, that leads from the church of Whitwell to our road, and which, if the paſſenger has leiſure and patience to aſcend, will amply repay him for his trouble, by diſcloſing to him a complete plan of all the country below, from one extremity to the other; for this is the ſpot, from whence the whole may be comprehended to the greateſt advantage. Half a mile onwards, we ſee a narrow cart-road deſcend from the ſame pariſh.

Near the cottage of St. Lawrence, a tolerable coach-road has lately been carried along the ſide of the cliff, at the expence of Sir Richard Worſley, but as it is continued through the park of Appuldurcombe, it is of no ſervice to the chaiſe or coach of the traveller, unleſs he can get previous permiſſion to paſs through the park.

A ſafe, though precipitous, coach-road

has been long eſtabliſhed from the Downs to Steephill.

But the beſt and eaſieſt, of all the roads, branches from the Down, immediately above Steephill, and deſcends to the village of Ventnor, where it joins the common road from Niton to Bouchurch; and therefore, if Shanklin was not included in the route of this day, I ſhould adviſe the party to return from Bouchurch to Ventnor, to aſcend the hill from that village, and purſue the road, by the ſide of Appuldurcombe park, to Godſhill and Newport.

Having left my reader on the ſummit of Bouchurch Hill, I ſhall now accompany him, through the large and fertile fields of its brow (from whence we may look down on a pictureſque farm, called Luccomb, and on the opening of its little chine, which, in every reſpect, except in magnitude, is ſimilar to that of Shanklin)

to

to a hanging wood, through which we deſcended to the verdant paſtures of the neat and pleaſant pariſh of Shanklin. In this wood, the ſource of the Shanklin current riſes, which croſſes the road immediately at its foot. It is here a narrow and ſhallow rivulet, the channel of which is ſhaded and is ſlowly deepened, till it arrives in the ſtreet, from whence it begins to wear a more formidable appearance: its limpid ſtream is from hence rapidly hurried down an increaſing chaſm, and in one place, down a perpendicular rock of twenty feet, till it has made its way, through the yielding ſands of the ſhore, to the ſea. The water generally continues a little brook, though ſometimes it is ſwoln to a conſiderable torrent, either by heavy rains, or by the melting ſnows.

While our horſes were refreſhing themſelves at a little alehouſe, we walked about a quar-

a quarter of a mile, partly along the brink of the Chine, till we came to the ſharp, precipitous point at its grand opening.

This opening appears to be about one hundred and fifty feet wide, from one ſummit to the other, and its perpendicular height is not much leſs than one hundred yards. Each ſide of it regularly declines to the narrow confinement of the little brook below, and every part is cloſely lined with buſhes, briars, and a few dwarf trees. In tracing the current upwards, the chaſm is gradually contracted in its breadth, but it is conſiderable even at the Waterfall, the abruptneſs of which prevents all communication between the village and the Chine, from the bottom of the valley.

The form of this great chaſm, or Chine, as it is here called, may be beſt diſtinguiſhed from the walk above, from whence it reſembles the ſerpentine cavity of the human

man ear, increaſing in its width till it ends on the ſhore.

Two pictureſque cottages are placed upon ledges, of different elevations, on the declivity of the Chine; one of them is an alehouſe, the accommodations of which we had no inclinations to experience, though it is not uncommon for parties to bring a cold collation with them, and to enjoy it, *al freſco*, on its ſkittle alley, while they may repoſe themſelves upon benches rudely excavated from the ſand-ſtone bank; and I myſelf have ſeen, in the courſe of a few hours, a ſucceſſion of five or ſix companies regaling themſelves on this ſingular ſpot, which indeed might give an agreeable reliſh to the coarſeſt meal.

We deſcended from the high ſharp point of the chaſm by a winding path to the alehouſe cottage, and from thence, by ſome irregular ſtone ſteps, to the ſea-ſhore, which

conſiſts

conſiſts of the fineſt and ſofteſt ſand, and which is ſo level that it would rival the bay of Weymouth for the accommodation of bathing, if its bleak expoſure to the ocean did not intimidate people from undertaking ſo raſh an experiment.

From theſe ſands the verdure of the declivity of the chine is ſtrongly contraſted with the naked precipices of the ſhore, the views of which are terminated, on the ſouth, by the Dunnoſe promontory, and extend, on the north eaſt, to the chalky front of the Culver cliffs, including the whole of the Sandown bay.

Large quantities of copperas are found on this beach, and we ſaw many heaps of it piled up, near the mouth of the chaſm, and prepared for its exportation to the London markets.

To account for ſuch extraordinary chines or chaſms, which are to be ſeen in many parts

parts of the iſland, may require ſome difficulties, but, if I might be permitted to hazard an opinion upon the ſubject, I ſhould preſume that the gathering of the rains and ſprings, might, originally, have formed a large lake, where the pariſh of Shanklin now ſtands; and that the waters, not finding any paſſage to the ſea, on account of the lofty barriers of cliff on its ſhore, might, at length, from the preſſure of their immenſe weight, have forced their way through the weakeſt part of the cliffs; and, conſequently, by the ſudden and impetuous ſubſidence of the waters, ſuch a chine as the preſent would have been formed, and its mouth muſt, of courſe, be the deepeſt and wideſt part, as all the water would be there collected, and violently forced through that particular ſpot.

Excluſive of the Chine at Shanklin, which is deſervedly ranked among the

principal objects of the iſland, the pariſh itſelf invites the attention of every obſerving paſſenger, for, though not large, the neatneſs of every cottage, the park-like lawns, through which the ſhady current meanders to the Chine; the acclivities around them, enriched with coppices, and with reſpectable aſhes and oaks; and the mountainous range of its coaſt, mark the environs of Shanklin as a ſpot, where we might naturally expect ſome noble manſion: but, alas! none is to be found, nor is there any tradition, that human art has, at any time, contributed to render this ſcenery ſo pleaſing to the ſpectator.

About two miles from Shanklin, we paſſed through the fertile and large incloſures, that, on every ſide, ſurround the ſcattered farms and cottages of the pariſh of Arreton, the church and parſonage houſe of which are pleaſantly ſituated, near the foot

of

of one of thoſe downs, which takes its name from this pariſh, and from which, the reader muſt have enjoyed the proſpects on the previous day. We now aſcended, by a long and narrow lane, to the ſummit of a down called St. George's, which is the moſt centrical elevation of the iſland. It is unconnected with any other hills, and the plain upon its top may be a mile in length. The views from it are not ſo extenſive, as thoſe from the higher hills, though they are ſufficiently varied to arreſt, occaſionally, the progreſs of a paſſenger, and particularly, on the ſpot, where the whole length of the Newport river diſcloſes itſelf, from that town, even to the harbour and ſtreets of Cowes.

At the foot of St. George's Down, we joined our morning road at Standen, and conſequently, were quickly at our quarters in the Bugle inn. It is here neceſſary to ob-

ſerve, that the journey over St. George's Down has, lately, been much neglected, and that a circuitous road, round the baſe of the hill, from Newport to Arreton, has, for ſome years, been purſued in the uſual routes.

On this account, I need not point out the propriety of making ſome enquiries, about the preſent goodneſs of the paſſage over the Down, before it is attempted by four-wheel carriages.

HITHER-

HITHERTO I have attempted to reduce the tour of the iſle of Wight into three principal circuits, for the ſake of thoſe, who may not have leiſure to extend their opportunity beyond three days. But, as many delightful ſpots, deſerving notice, ſtill remain undeſcribed, that could not be reduced within the limits of thoſe circuits, I ſhall now proceed to particularize a few, which, by ſome deviation from the general outline, may be viſited, according to the time that may be ſpared, or according to the taſte that may prevail among my readers; and for their ſatisfaction, I ſhall make ſuch references from one route to another, that may be, in my

my opinion, the moſt intelligible to them, and the moſt eaſily practiſed.

I ſhall commence with a ſhort excurſion for horſemen from Aſhey Down, page 57,

	MILES.
To Alverſton - - - -	2
Bordwood by the Queen's Bower - - - - - -	2
Newchurch - - - - -	1
Knighton - - - - -	1
Aſhey Down - - - -	1
	7

A rough and ſteep deſcent brought us to the neat little hamlet of Alverſton, and ſoon after we arrived at a poor and beggarly cottage, placed on the point of a high inſulated knoll, called the Queen's Bower, which, by a popular tradition, is ſuppoſed to have been a ſpot, from whence our ancient queens enjoyed the views of the chace around

around it, when this part of the iſland made one of the innumerable foreſts, that checked the progreſs of cultivation through, at leaſt, a fourth of the kingdom. This elevated ſcite attracts the eye from every road in the vale, and particularly, from the marſh, which we have paſſed between Brading and Sandown Fort. Bordwood, which gave the name to this foreſt, is ſtill an extenſive wood, and covers half of the circular hill of the Queen's Bower, with its thick ſhade. An uncultivated heath connects this wood with the populous ſtreet of Newchurch, the church of which is large, and ſtands upon an eminence, that commands moſt parts of the circumjacent country. We now paſſed by the large and venerable manſion of Knighton, half mantled with ivy up to its roof, which, though it appeared from the hills above, to be fixed in the abyſs of a valley, yet commands an extenſive

tenſive proſpect over a country, that is ſtill much lower than the houſe. A few minutes brought us from Knighton to the high road, that leads from Aſhey Down to Newport.

From Brading, *(See p. 51)*

	MILES.
To Nunwell - - - -	1
Brading Down - -	1
Grove - - - - - -	1
Sandown Fort - - -	1½
Yaverland - - - -	1
Bimbridge Down and Culver Cliffs - - -	2
Longlang farm - -	1½
Windmill - - - -	1
Foreland Farm - - -	1
Yarbridge - - - -	3
Brading - - - - -	1
	15

The antient ſeat of the Oglanders, at Nun-

Nunwell, has been modernized and much improved by the preſent baronet, Sir William. It ſtands on a riſing ground, at the end of a park-like lawn, and is backed by a ſolemn grove of lofty aſhes and limes. The great ſize of the oaks, and other timber trees, both within and without the domain of the place, much of which is even fit for the Dock yard; the beautiful diſpoſition of the grounds, and the extent of its neighbouring woods, might claim attention from the moſt negligent traveller. Nor is Nunwell deficient in its ſea views, as the whole harbour of Brading, and part of the road of St. Helen's, are viſible from its windows.

Nunwell would, indeed, be conſidered as a fine *place*, independent of its peculiar proſpects in any part of England, and, conſequently, muſt appear ſuch to the touriſts of this little iſland, in an eminent de-

gree, where real *places* and real timber are extremely rare.

We now croſſed Brading Down, of which ſome notice has been taken in the ſecond day's journey, and deſcended on the oppoſite ſide to a charming ſpot, called Grove. Here ſome large and well proportioned rooms have lately been added to a farm-houſe, and a ſhady garden adjoins to them, which is laid out in a good taſte, and preſerved in proper order: the new rooms are, alſo, handſomely fitted up and furniſhed. But, I am ſorry to add, that theſe additions are neither inhabited, nor ſuffered to be let, by the gentleman who made the improvements, though, perhaps, a more eligible ſituation for a private family could not be found on this ſide of the iſland, The luxuriant woods on the north; the whole peninſula of Bimbridge and its beautiful down; or the romantic ſcenery of the

ſouth,

ſouth, might either of them be eaſily comprehended within a morning's ride. We now croſſed over a wide and level marſh to the hamlet of Sandown and quickly arrived at its fort. This fort has been deſcribed at page 53.

It is remarkable, that the Britiſh Channel is here ſeparated from a little brook, by a narrow, pebbly bank, in a manner preciſely ſimilar to the ſeparation at Freſhwater Gate, and there can be no doubt, but that the ocean once flowed between Brading and Yaverland, as well as between the pariſhes of Freſhwater and Thorley. The low and level marſh of Sandown ſhews evident marks of its having been formerly covered with the ſea, and it is as evident, that a creek or inlet of the ſea, in ſtill more antient times, flowed ſome miles higher into the country, even to Newchurch and beyond it; where, I was informed, it was

not uncommon, near the banks of the rivulet, to find ſhells and other marine productions, within a few feet of the ſurface of the preſent ſoil. The rivulet, which runs from Freſhwater Gate to Yarmouth, ſtill preſerves the name of Yar, but though the name is now loſt to the river, at this end of the iſland, yet it is plainly preſerved by a bridge, which we ſhall croſs on our return to Brading, and which is ſtill called Yar-bridge. It is alſo probable, that Yaverland may be a corruption of Yar-land, which, in my opinion, is a much better interpretation, than the general received notion of its being derived from Over-land. The ſources of this little river are traced far up into the country, one branch of it riſing at Wroxhall, and another at Whitwell, at the diſtance of more than fourteen miles from Yar-bridge; but as nothing, ſimilar to Yar, is to be met with in either courſe,

courſe, it is probable, that the brooks might be anonymous, till they formed the ſeparation of the two diſtricts, or, perhaps, the name might be confined to the little ſpring, that riſes cloſe to the fort.

No ſpot, perhaps, upon the terreſtrial globe ſhews more evident proofs of the gradual ſeceſſion of the ſeas, than this iſland. The numerous ſalterns, and the many narrow vallies, on the ſide towards Portſmouth, were, indiſputably, antient creeks, or inlets from the ſea; and the contracted creeks, which, ſtill remain, have, viſibly, left long tracks of deſerted land above them: within the time of hiſtory, ſome of theſe are known to have been even ports or harbours: but I ſhall not carry my hypotheſis ſo far, as to think that all theſe great ſeceſſions were made, within the period that theſe northern countries were known to be inhabited.

Moderate

Moderate and ſlow ſeceſſions have, probably, been apparent for the laſt thouſand years, but it is well known, that the now ſhallow harbour of Brading has been, at different times, much contracted, and has been partially embanked, according as the waters have ſeceded from it. May not then the waters, which, our religion teaches us, were let looſe and covered the whole face of the earth, have gradually ſubſided, from that period, within the bowels of its parent earth; and may they not ſtill continue to ſubſide, though, proportionally, in a much leſs degree than at the beginning, as the earth muſt now be the more nearly ſaturated with them?

I need not attempt to refute the vulgar error, that ſuppoſes the ſea to gain in one place, what it loſes in another, and that the quantity of its water remains the ſame; for as no natural level is ſo perfect as water,

it

it muſt follow, that if the ſea actually ſubſides in one place, it muſt, conſequently, ſubſide in all.

Violent tempeſts and extraordinary inundations have ſometimes, indeed, overwhelmed large countries, and have carried off, on their retreat, the ſuperficial parts of its ſoil, while the lower and firmer ground ſtill continues to be overflown. Mountains and rocks have alſo been undermined by the ſea, and huge fragments have occaſionally been ſeparated from them, and ſtill appear in its waters. But theſe convulſions form no argument againſt the above ſtated hypotheſis, for, unleſs it can be proved, that the original height of the lands was ſtill overflown, they will prove nothing, and if that was a fact, it would neceſſarily follow, that no other land could ever have been deſerted by the ſea.

I am aware, that the ſituation of the old church

church of St. Helen's, which is mentioned at page 51, may be urged, with ſome appearance of reaſon, againſt the theory. Part of its church yard has, actually, been waſhed away by the waves, and the remnants of its tower are in danger of falling a ſacrifice to their fury. But it is well known, that this church was originally erected at ſome diſtance from the ſhore, and that the land which ſhould have defended it from the violence of the diſtant waves, has been torn away by occaſional inundations. It is alſo well known, that its foundations, though very low, are ſtill higher than the higheſt water mark in a calm ſea; but that, part of the land, which protected the church, being waſhed away and now reduced to a high ſand bank, that projects over three fourths of the harbour of Brading, the ruin is now, and has been, for many years, wholly expoſed to the raging ſwell

of

of the ſtorms, which is greatly increaſed by the check it receives from the remaining neck of land, and by which the church is now cloſely and totally embayed.

This church was founded about the year 1100, and the ſea is not ſuppoſed to have ſubſided in any great degree, within the period of the laſt 800 years.

But to return from this digreſſion.

Leaving the open beach of Sandown Fort, with a full view of the Culver Cliffs before us, we arrived among the ſhades of the ſtreet of Yaverland, at the upper end of which, ſtands, in a bold ſituation, a large and reſpectable manſion, of the time of Queen Elizabeth. It is now the reſidence of a farmer. The little pariſh church adjoins to it, and is remarkable for a well-preſerved ſemicircular arch of Norman origin, which is ornamented with various mouldings, and particularly, with one,

deeply indented with a long, broad and beautiful fluting.

We now aſcended Bimbridge Down, on the top of which are ſome large corn-fields, that divide the Down into two nearly equal parts. We rode through theſe fields to the end of the farther part, where its whole outline is terminated by the chalky precipices of the Culver Cliffs.

The approach to theſe cliffs is of ſo tremendous a nature, that few people will dare to venture to look down on their perpendicular ſides. How then will ſuch people ſhudder at the bare deſcription of the Hermit's Hole!

This cave penetrates, about twenty feet, into the rock, and lies, about thirty feet, below the higheſt point, on the weſt end of the cliffs; the path that declines to it is ſteep, narrow, and rugged; and a lady informed me, who had the courage to undertake

take and accompliſh the perilous deſcent, that, after ſhe had once quitted the brink of the precipice, it was actually impoſſible for her to return or retreat, till ſhe had reached the cave below. So irregular and contracted was the path that led to it, that there was not ſufficient ſpace for her feet to turn about. Being well ſatisfied with the truth of this deſcription, I was perfectly contented, as moſt of my readers will, probably, be, to gaze at its tremendous entrance, from the ſea ſhore below, between Sandown Fort and Yaverland, and from whence it even makes ſo formidable an appearance, that the ſtrongeſt nerves may ſhudder at it, and ſhrink from its view.

Theſe cliffs were formerly famous for a curious breed of hawks, the ſpecies of which ſtill remains and multiplies, for, the royal diverſion of hawking being almoſt obſolete, there can be no temptation, at preſent, for

diſturbing their aerial haunts. We looked down upon many of theſe birds, and ſaw them ſoaring, in their circular rings, with the moſt unſuſpicious ſecurity.

The views from this Down are not exceeded by thoſe of any other hill in the iſland, as they exhibit a greater mixture of wood, water, and rocks, within a narrower compaſs; but as my reader muſt now be ſufficiently acquainted with the geography of the iſland, I ſhall not treſpaſs upon his patience in pointing out any particular ſpot.

We returned from this Down to Longland Farm, from whence the road conducted us, along the ſhady lanes, near the Harbour of Brading, and cloſe to a windmill, to the farm of Foreland. We from hence rode to the ſhore, which is the eaſternmoſt point of the iſland, where the ſcenery is widely different from that of the weſt

weſt extremity. Inſtead of the high lands, deep ſeas, and precipices of Freſhwater, we were here amuſed with the placid and tranquil view of a low, regular bank, and a level, ſandy beach. This alteration, in the face of this iſland, tends to ſtrengthen the obſervation I have ſomewhere met with, that the high lands of every country in the world, whether of continents or of iſlands, are always ſituated on their weſtern ſhores, and that they gradually leſſen, and ſenſibly decline towards the eaſt. But the cauſe of this wonderful operation of nature, I think, has never been explained.

At low water, indeed, the tranquillity of the proſpect would be ſomewhat diſturbed by the rugged appearance of the Bimbridge ledge, which extends its dangerous rocks from this point, for more than a mile ſquare, into the ſea. We returned, by a good coach road, from the Foreland to Yaverland,

Yaverland, and from thence, to Yarbridge, which, as I have before obſerved, croſſes the Yar. This river is now confined to a narrow channel, and its common current runs ſome feet lower than the meadows of its banks; but though theſe were, antiently, covered with the ſea, yet the lands might have exiſted as a marſh, many centuries before the iſland was either cultivated or inhabited.

I am not ſufficiently verſed in etymology to know the meaning of the word Yar, nor from what language it may be derived. I acknowledge my ignorance alſo in the explanation of the word Dover, which is the name given to the mouth of every antient creek in the iſland.

I have now finiſhed the circuit of the little peninſula of Bimbridge; it is extremely fertile, well cultivated, and its tenants appear to be of a ſuperior claſs to the common

common farmers. Its fences are ſtrong and flouriſhing, notwithſtanding their expoſure to the ſpray of the water, and conſidering this circumſtance, I was ſomewhat ſurprized to ſee its woods and groves in a very thriving ſtate.

	MILES.
FROM Shanklin to the Wood - -	1
End of Ventnor Down - -	2½
To the road to Whitwell -	2
Whitwell - - - - -	1½
Godshill - - - - -	3
Appuldurcombe - - -	2
Princelet Shoot - - -	2½
Apſe Farm - - - -	1
Shanklin - - - - -	2
	17½

I have

I have commenced this morning's ride from Shanklin, as decent apartments, if wanted, may be hired for a night or longer time, at moſt of the cottages in the village, and particularly, as *horſemen* may, from thence, undertake it without much interruption to their general plan. However, I muſt obſerve, that Appuldurcombe will be beſt viſited, by a large company, from Newport, from which it is only eight miles diſtant.

Having aſcended the hanging wood above Shanklin, we turned on its ſummit to the right hand, and purſued our ride over the high range of Downs, that back the farm of Luccombe, the pariſh of Bouchurch, and the villages of St. Boniface and Ventnor, from whence the views, peculiar to this iſland, exhibit their ſurpriſing variety, till we arrived at the coach-

road,

road, that deſcends to Steephill, from Newport.

In one of my viſits to Steephill from Newport, I was induced by the calmneſs of the weather, and an uncommon tranſparency of the atmoſphere, to perſuade my party to quit their carriages on this ſpot, and to walk along the lowermoſt track of the brow of the hill, which conducted us, without the poſſibility of a miſtake, to the new cottage of Sir Richard Worſley, at St. Lawrence. We from hence enjoyed the full beauties of the wonderful ſcenery below; our walk was eaſy and ſloping, till we joined the new road made by Sir Richard Worſley, when the deſcent became ſteep, and but practicable by any carriage. On moving downwards, new views opened to our aſtoniſhed ſight, and while the coloſſal fragments ſeemed to increaſe in their magnitude, on our nearer approach to them,

the grand wall of rock, above, gradually diſcloſed its ſtupendous front, and made us ſhudder at the reflection of our having ignorantly walked within a few feet of its precipitous ſummit. It is proper to obſerve, that this walk to the cottage is nearly two miles, and I mention this for the ſake of thoſe ladies and gentlemen, who may be unuſed to the motion of their legs, though the beauty of its proſpects, and its being a down-hill track, might invite the moſt indolent to undertake it.

But to return---We now croſſed the road that leads from Newport to Steephill, and continued our ride along the uppermoſt brow of theſe high Downs, till we came to the Whitwell cart-road, at its deſcent to St. Lawrence; I do not recollect whether any direct tract is continued along the brink, to the bridle road from Whitwell, which is noticed at page 82, but if there be, I ſhould certainly

tainly recommend the paſſing along this centrical part of the whole range of rock: though, at all events, the horſes may be ſent round by a farm called Dean, and may meet the walkers, at the beginning of the deſcent of the bridle path; or perhaps, it might be preferable to deſcend the cliff by one road, and to aſcend it by the other.

The pariſh of Whitwell appears to be rich and populous, but deficient of trees. We paſſed thro' its ſtreet, and cloſe to the church, and riding at a little diſtance from the Down of Appuldurcombe Park, on the ſummit of which is erected an obeliſk, we came to Godſhill. It was natural, from the decent appearance of this pariſh, for us to expect ſome refreſhment in it, both for ourſelves and our horſes, but not an alehouſe, of ſufficient credit, is to be found here, that could ſupply either corn or hay. A farmhouſe afforded us thoſe neceſſaries, while

walked into the church. This edifice is erected, above the ſtreet, upon a lofty and ſteep knoll, and having a handſome tower, is conſpicuouſly viſible from every part of this wide and extenſive vale. The inſide is kept very neat, which a long range of Gothic arches equally divides into two ſimilar aiſles. Another aiſle croſſes the church from north to ſouth, and in the north part of it a ſuperb modern monument, of marble, has lately been erected to the memories of Sir Robert Worſley and his brother Henry, the laſt heirs of the elder branch of this family, and whoſe buſts are finely ſculptured, and placed upon the ſarcophagus of the monument. Several other monuments of the Worſley family, and of the ſtill more ancient proprietors of Appuldurcombe, are to be ſeen within its walls.

We are now arrived at the park-gate of Appuldurcombe, which we entered through a well

a well proportioned arch of Portland ſtone. The park is of great extent, but though there are ſome large groves of timber near the houſe, yet the naked parts are ſo prevalent, that we could not but regret the deficiency of wood.

The houſe is ſquare and of great dimenſions: it has lately been finiſhed, with ſome ſmall deviations from an original plan, begun in 1710, and which may be ſeen in one of the early volumes of the Vitruvius Britannicus. It is ſituated at ſome diſtance from the road, within the park, and being built from the quarries of Portland, and unincumbered with adjoining offices, offers a magnificent object to the high road and to the hills above it, particularly, when the rays of the ſun are reflected from its beautiful ſtone.

The architecture of the manſion cannot be commended, though its ſingularity and magni-

magnitude will, perhaps, appear pleaſing to thoſe, who have not the taſte to prefer the chaſte ſimplicity of the ancient architects, the ſtyle of whom is now adopted by, and contributes to the chief merit of our preſent builders.

The projecting buildings, though adorned with pilaſters and pediments, which break and advance from the body of the houſe on each ſide, ſeem to be no part of an original deſign, but rather appear like excreſcent additions to it. In thoſe, however, of the eaſt or principal front, are the beſt rooms of the houſe, one of them being appropriated to the dining parlour, and the other to the withdrawing room.

But upon opening the doors---the hall diſcloſed to us ſuch a variety of beauties, that made us forget all criticiſm. This room is fifty-four feet long and twenty-four wide, the ends of which are ſeparated from

from the main body, by four columns, on each ſide, of a compoſition that might be miſtaken for porphyry.

Whichever way we turned our eyes in this hall, the moſt precious pieces of antient ſculpture, without mutilation, or paintings of the Roman and Venetian ſchools, claimed our attention. Theſe are all fixed on the walls of the room, and are arranged with ſo much taſte, elegance and harmony, that their diſpoſition could not be amended. The other rooms on this floor, are alſo ſuperbly furniſhed, and decorated with ſome fine pictures, and many excellent drawings of the cities, countries and ruins of the eaſt.

But above all, we had permiſſion to inſpect ſeven or eight portfolios, that contained an invaluable collection of modern drawings, and which was made under the immediate inſpection of Sir Richard Worſley,

ley, during his late tour in Egypt, Turkey, and Italy. It is a ſingular circumſtance that, in ſo large a collection of antiques, for they are diſperſed in almoſt every room, that nothing ſpurious, or like the refuſe of other collections ſhould appear, but that the minuteſt pieces ſhould deſerve ſome degree of attention.

We left the park of Appuldurcombe at the garden gate, and followed a good level road, ſurrounded with large fertile farms, till we came to a ſpot, called Princelet Shoot. On our way hither, the artificial ruins, of a Gothic caſtle, raiſed themſelves from the high brink of a woody precipice: they were principally erected as an object from Appuldurcombe houſe, but they alſo ſerve for a diſtinguiſhed mark, from all the low lands, between the north and the ſouth downs. Sir Richard Worſley has given the name of Cook's Caſtle, to the building: there

there is no direct road to it, and thoſe, who may be deſirous of inſpecting the ruins, will be obliged to treſpaſs, through pathleſs corn-fields, before their wiſhes can be gratified. However, neither the plan of this object, nor the deſigns upon which it was conſtructed, deſerve ſuch exertions; for the parts of it are as regular as the front of a houſe, and the ruined wings correſpond ſo preciſely, that the builder was, probably, apprehenſive leſt the artifice might be forgotten, and his curious work be miſtaken for the operation of Time.

The ſame kind of varied proſpect opens from theſe ruins, as from the other elevations of the iſland of equal height.

We turned from Princelet Shoot into a cart-road, through arable fields, which led us to Apſe Farm, and from thence, at the foot of the mountainous cliff of the pariſh, to Shanklin.

	MILES.
FROM Newport to Pann - - -	1½
Standen Farm	1½
Shide Bridge -	2
Cariſbrook Caſtle	1
Ride round it to Newport -	2
	8

I have inſerted the route of this moderate airing, on account of its being ſingularly different from any other in the Iſle of Wight, for after paſſing the Medine, behind the Mills of Newport, we ſoon entered upon the large and open fields of the farms of Pann and Weſt Standen, bounded by the Hill of St. George's on the ſouth, and of Stapler's Heath on the North. Here is no appearance of the neighbouring ſeas, and its diſtrict is as well calculated for the diverſion

diverſion of courſing or partridge-ſhooting, as the beſt ſporting counties of the kingdom. We returned from Standen by another road, over part of Pann Down, to Shide Bridge, and, croſſing the road from Newport to Niton, purſued a bridle-track to Cariſbrook Caſtle, the outward fortifications of which, by treſpaſſing through ſome incloſures, we ſurrounded and ſurveyed with much pleaſure. We then deſcended towards the pariſh church, and finiſhed this little excurſion at Newport.

	MILES.
FROM Newport to Widcomb - -	1½
Gatcomb - -	1½
Chillerton Farm	1
Billingham - -	1
Chale Church -	4
Black-Gang Chine and return -	1
St. Catherine's Hill and return -	1½
Kingſton - -	3
Shorwell - -	2
Newport - -	6
	22½

Our road of this morning conducted us cloſe under the outworks of Cariſbrook Caſtle, which we left on our right hand. We then entered into a broad and pleaſant vale, intermixed with woods, arable fields, and

and paſtures, and paſſing by Widcomb, and through the pariſh of Gatcomb, the latter of which places has been already noticed at page 61, as it appeared from the oppoſite ſide of the vale, and from whence the manſion houſe ſhews itſelf to rather more advantage than from the road adjoining to it, we traverſed the whole length of this vale, which continues till within four miles of Chale Church; here the country begins to expand itſelf into more level and extenſive fields, and to diſcloſe the boundleſs view of the Britiſh Channel, the proximity of which prevents the few trees, that are ſcattered thro' this open region, from ſhewing any ſigns of luxuriancy. The complexion of this country continues uniformly the ſame, through the pariſhes of Kingſton, Shorwell, Brixton, &c. till it is cloſed by the high lands of Afton Down, parts of all which pariſhes may be diſtinguiſhed from

our

our preſent road. From the church at Chale we begun our walk to the Black-gang Chine, the principal object of this day's excurſion; but notwithſtanding this, being ſituated out of all the common tracks, and no accommodations being to be met with in the pariſh, except from the farmers, it is rarely viſited, and may, perhaps, be as little known to the Newport guides, as it will, hereafter, appear to have been to the ignorant crew of our Ryde veſſel.

This chine is on the weſt declivity of St. Catherine's Hill, and its upper appearance is not far below its high ſummit: two currents, from diſtant parts of this hill, have made their way to its brow, and from this height have excavated two large ſeparate chaſms, but their waters form a junction at the foot of a high prominent point, the ſides of which have been torn away by their reſpective torrents. The chaſms, at this

junction

junction become one, and conſequently, much deepened; from whence the united waters, more rapidly, hurry down the ſteep channel, for about two hundred yards, till they arrive at an impenetrable precipice of rock, from whence they fall in a perpendicular caſcade, of forty feet, upon the ſhore.

The declivities of this chine are lined, alternately, with ſtrata of rock, and of a dark crumbling earth, from the latter of which its name of Black-gang is, probably, derived. This earth having been waſhed away by the current, the rock above it, of courſe, became undermined, and has fallen, the ſtones of which lie in large fragments, throughout every part of the channel. But a long and upright ſtratum of rock extends itſelf, on each ſide of the chaſm, in a linear and horizontal direction, and gives the appearance of a regular and grand embankment of the mountain.

A fiſh-

A fiſherman's cot lies upon the ſhore, near the fall of the caſcade, but the ſlides and ſinking of the ſofter mould are ſo frequent, that a deſcent to it, which is perfectly ſound and ſecure to day, may be impracticable to-morrow. However, as faſt as one walk is deſtroyed, another is either made, or diſcovered, by the induſtry of the fiſherman who is ſettled below. The beach is level, and of the fineſt ſand, and from it a moſt comprehenſive view, not only of this ſtupendous chine, but of the whole line of coaſt, to the extremity of the Freſh-water Cliffs, is clearly diſcernible.

Leſt the reader ſhould expect too much, from my account of the caſcade, I muſt inform him that, in general, it is no more than a ſmall driveling ſtream, but, when increaſed by hard inceſſant rains, or by quick thawing ſnows, it then exhibits a formidable appearance, and its torrent, occaſionally,

caſionally, even forces the huge fragments down the precipice along with it.

A great contraſt muſt have been obſerved between this chine of Black-gang, and that of Shanklin: the latter is gradually ſupplied with an accumulation of waters, collected from ſprings at a conſiderable diſtance above it, and, conſequently their vent is almoſt as regular, as their accumulation; while the former is only ſupplied by a ſudden gathering of waters, that are drained from the top of its hill and its declivities, and inſtantly deſcend down a ſteep channel to the ſhore.

Shanklin, certainly, offers the more placid and pleaſing picture, on account of the ſhrubs, buſhes, and trees, that cover and adorn all its parts; its ſerpentine direction has alſo a peculiar beauty. The charms of Black-gang are, on the contrary, upon a ſcale more grand and horrible---they exhi-

bit a more ſavage and barbarous appearance---and not a buſh is to be ſeen on any part of their mouldered or mouldering precipices.

Many ſmall chines are to be ſeen on this expoſed coaſt, as well in this pariſh of Chale, as in thoſe of Brixton, and Brook, which might afford ſome amuſement for a morning's airing, but would ſcarcely repay the hurrying traveller, for the difficulties and loſs of time, which he would ſuffer by inſpecting them.

Being returned to Chale Church, we mounted our horſes and aſcended to the ſummit of St. Catherine's Hill. It is the higheſt in the iſland, being ſeven hundred and fifty feet above the ſea level. I need not attempt to deſcribe the extent of proſpects, that are viſible from a hill, even higher than Aſton Down, or Freſhwater Cliffs. The octagon tower of an ancient ruined chapel, thirty

ſix

ſix feet high, ſtill remains at its top, and at a little diſtance from it, is alſo a light-houſe: the relative bearings, of theſe two exalted buildings, ſerve to inſtruct the cautious mariner, through every part of this dangerous coaſt.

From one of theſe buildings, we looked down upon the church and pariſh of Crab Niton, which is only two miles diſtant from Chale, and from which it is divided by this hill of St. Catherine. The road between the pariſhes, though very indifferent, is paſſable to coaches, and I have, more than once, ſafely traverſed it in a four-wheel carriage. We could not reſiſt the temptation of walking to the brow of the Down, that commands the chaſms of the Black-gang Chine, and from hence we took a farewell view of all its horrors, though, indeed, they did not wear ſo terrible an aſpect, as from below.

Returning to Chale, we repaſſed about three miles of our morning's road, which we then left on our right hand, and having ſkirted the church-yard of the little pariſh of Kingſton, we ſoon arrived, over a rocky country, lightly covered with a thin ſand, at Shorwell, from whence we returned by the old manſion of North-Court, deſcribed at page 19, to our quarters at Newport.

The reader may obſerve, from the foregoing account, that Chale and the Chine may be introduced, either in the firſt or third day's tour, if he ſhould be inclined to viſit them; but he ought to be apprized, that the walk to and from the Chine will employ him for nearly two hours. Both roads are practicable by any ſort of carriage.

The

MILES.

THE old road from Newport

To St. Helen's

Staplers - -	1
Combley Lyn -	2½
Haven Street -	2
Camp Hill - -	1
Barneſley Farm	3
Park Farm - -	1
St. Helen's - -	1

This was, about twenty years ſince, the high and coach road to Ryde and St. Helen's, about which time the preſent excellent road was formed acroſs Wootton Bridge, and conſequently, this old track is now ſo much neglected, that few carriages are rarely ſeen upon it.

Combley Lyn is a lofty and conſpicuous ſpot, on which is erected a white barn with

with tenements adjoining to it, viſible from a great diſtance---The immenſe range of wood, called Combley Wood, continues from it to the length of a mile on the ſouth, and to more than two miles on the weſt. The whole was part of the poſſeſſions of the Abbey of Quarr, the property of which abbey is now veſted in Mr. Fleming, and forms one of the moſt beautiful, fineſt, and compact eſtates in the kingdom, beginning from the ſea, near the abbey ruins, and ending at Haſely Farm, in the pariſh of Arreton, which includes the ſpace of more than ſix miles.

Some large fields are intermixed among the brows of this extenſive wood, which ſeem to invite the erection of a manſion-houſe, and from which nature alone has deſigned the moſt magnificent viſtas, that expand, through the deſcending woods, to the vallies below.

Black

Black Bridge, noticed at page 37, is thrown acroſs a deep torrent, over which the road paſſes to Haven Street, conſiſting of a long line of ſcattered houſes, and probably ſo denominated from its neighbourhood to the pool of Wootton bridge.

Camp, or Kemp hill is a ſingle farm-houſe on a riſing ground, and is one of thoſe ſpots, the name of which induced me to ſearch for ſome old encampment in its neighbourhood, but I could not diſcover the ſmalleſt veſtige or probability of any ſuch intrenchments.

We croſſed the coach roads from Ryde to Newchurch, and from Ryde to Brading, before we came to Barneſly Farm, and riding from thence, through the beautiful fields of Park Farm, which ſtill has the appearance of a ſylvan park, ſoon arrived at St. Helen's Green.

The beginning of this morning's ride was

was through an open and high country, till we came to Combley Lyn, from whence the road chiefly paſſed, through either woods or ſhady lanes, to St. Helen's, for though Combley Wood does not continue beyond Haven-Street, yet other woods are connected with it, which are, in general, the property of Sir William Oglander, and whoſe property is eaſily aſcertained, by the peculiar ſize and care of its timber.

A VOY-

A

VOYAGE

ROUND THE ISLAND.

AS it might be conſidered an unpardonable omiſſion, if I was not to take ſome notice of a voyage round the Iſle of Wight, in this little work; the pleaſures of which are anticipated, with raptures, by thoſe who have not undertaken it, and who regard the tour of the Iſland as incomplete without it: I ſhall indulge my reader's curioſity, though I muſt take leave to premiſe my account of it, with a few general obſervations.

I have made this ſailing expedition many times, and at different ſeaſons of the year, but I never engaged in one, where the party did not expreſs more pleaſure and ſatisfaction at its being completed, than either at the actual commencement, or in any part of its continuation. The circuit by water is about eighty miles, and it can ſcarcely be expected, in the moſt accommodating weather, to be finiſhed in leſs than fourteen hours, though I have experienced its tedious duration for twenty-five. If the voyage be made in a calm and ſmooth ſea, an impatience and laſſitude will certainly oppreſs and overwhelm the ſpirits of any company; and if a gale of wind ſhould haſten the progreſs of the veſſel, ſickneſs and fears, though groundleſs, will, probably, prevent them from enjoying the variety of landſcapes, that the coaſts of the iſland offer to their view. I ſhould therefore

fore recommend this uncertain voyage to thoſe ladies and gentlemen only, who may poſſeſs an uncommon degree of chearfulneſs and good humour, and are proof againſt the convulſive operations of a ſea ſickneſs.

In one of the moſt fortunate of my voyages, we began this celebrated expedition from Ryde, at five o'clock, in a morning of the month of July, and, with a fair and eaſterly wind, ſucceſsfully ſailed along the woody and beautiful coaſt of Binſtead, Wootton, and Whippingham, when the town and harbour of Cowes opened their buſy and lively ſcenes to our paſſage. The coaſt, from Cowes, now changes to the inſipid tameneſs of an open and heathy country: till we arrived off Yarmouth, when the hamlet of Norton, on the oppoſite banks of the Yar, ſhewed ſome ſigns of richneſs, while its ſcattered cottages, among

the frequent groves, were not unpleaſing to our inquiſitive eyes.

We now paſſed between the projecting point of Worſley's tower and Hurſt caſtle, the paſſage through which is no more than three quarters of a mile wide, but it has the uncommon depth of ſeventy yards.

The land begins now to aſcend to ſome height; the whole ſoil is a ſtiff clay, and declines from the hills to the ſhore, while the ſunken ſeparations, and wide chaſms of the long ſlope, both antient and modern, were very apparent to our veſſel. At the entrance of Allum Bay, ſo called from that mineral being found here, this ſloping diſpoſition of the clayey ſoil, ſingularly and abruptly terminates---and the chalky cliffs inſtantaneouſly exhibit their perpendicular precipices to the height of five or ſix hundred feet, which are continued, with little variation in their ſummits, quite round the

Needle

Needle Point, to Freſhwater Gate. We may now ſuppoſe ourſelves clear of the farthermoſt Needle Rock, three of which have ſtill defied, with ſecurity, the blaſts and tempeſts of the equinoctial ſtorms, and rear their wedge-formed fronts, and craggy tops at ſome diſtance from each other. The fourth, emphatically called *the Needle*, was a tall, tapering maſs of ſtone, of a ſmall proportionate diameter, and roſe to upwards of one hundred feet: the foundations of this being, at length, worn away by the agitation of the waves, the whole pillar yielded to their fury, about the year 1764, and fell with ſuch a tremendous craſh, that the ſenſations of it were actually felt at Southampton. This rock is now totally buried in the waters, and not a wreck of it left above.

At the end of the main land of the point, and at the foot of the cliff, the daſhing of the

the waters has formed a large arch, which, we were informed, was paſſable at low tides.

Theſe Needles were, indiſputably, the more ſolid parts of a long line of land, which, at a very remote period, reached from the cliffs as far as the ſhingle rock, which ſtill appears much above the water at half ebb, and rears its dangerous head, at two or three miles diſtant, weſt from the Needles.

While we were admiring theſe iſolated fragments, and the majeſtic range of precipices diverging from each ſide of the ſharp Needle Point, the wind ſuddenly ſubſided, and we were, unfortunately, becalmed. But not ſo was the ſea, for it ran very high, and our veſſel was, conſequently, toſſed upwards and downwards, to the right or to the left, at the direction of the waves; while the ſudden and continual ſhifting of

our

our ſails obeying the different rollings of our veſſel, gave ſuch unexpected jolts and jerks to it, that not one of my company could keep upon their legs, nor always upon their ſeats.

Add to this, that the ſmalleſt progreſs of advancing forward was denied to our irregular and ſtomach-rending motions. We continued in this doleful and comfortleſs ſituation, during two hours, without pity or compaſſion from thoſe who felt no effects from it; for it is a faſhionable ſea witticiſm to ridicule and make a jeſt of thoſe, whoſe violent reachings and ſtrainings might break a blood veſſel; and this barbarous kind of wit is ſo contagious or epidemical, that I have known it facetiouſly practiſed by many, while they happened to be relieved, by ſhort intervals of eaſe, from their own paroxyſms. The wind now began to freſhen again, but unluckily

unluckily for us, from its old quarter in the eaſt. The veſſel, however, having a progreſſive tendency, my company were partially relieved from their ſickneſs, and could raiſe their heads, towards the Freſhwater Gate and cavern, with ſome degree of animation.

The coaſt of Mottiſtone, Brixton, Shorwell, and Chale, exhibited its long, waving, and, comparatively, low cliffs to our view, till we approached the Point of St. Catherine's, where that prominent and proud hill offers, as much of the ſublime, and more of the horrible, than thoſe of Freſhwater.

Here, indeed, are no perpendicular cliffs; but here are precipices of a different quality, for the whole hill of St. Catherine's declines from its ſummit to the ſhore, with ſuch huge and broken rocks, and incumbent upon each other in ſuch varieties of direction, that no part of its declivity can be

thoroughly

thoroughly traverſed, either by man or beaſt. And here, alſo, the grand chaſm of the Black-gang Chine, the near deſcription of which has been attempted in a former route, obtruded its magnificent horrors upon our ſight. No information of this wonderful phænomenon could be procured from our little crew, for, as they were inhabitants of the oppoſite ſide of the iſland, they were as ignorant of it, as if they had belonged to the other hemiſphere. The ſame wind ſtill continuing, we were now obliged to make ſome long tacks into the Britiſh Channel, which had its uſual effect upon the bowels of my company, and the common bucket of the veſſel was kept in continual employment. The return of theſe tacks occaſionally brought us, within a clear view of the five famous miles of the Undercliff, which I have deſcribed, from my notes

of this voyage at page 67, as they appear from the ſea.

We now, in the ſeamen's phraſe, doubled the great point of Dunnoſe, the declivity of which is ſomething ſimilar to that of St. Catherine's---and paſſing at ſome little diſtance from the chine of Shanklin, *les Bijoux* of Mr. Wilkes, and the fort of Sandown, we arrived at the eaſt horn of the bay of Sandown, at the Culver Cliffs, when the ſun cloſed its ſetting rays upon us: we had, however, ſufficient twilight to enable us to diſtinguiſh the low lands of the peninſula of Bimbridge, the mouth of Brading harbour, and the ſylvan ſhore of St. Helen's, and ſoon after we were ſafely and happily landed from our circuitous voyage, at our little port of Ryde, about ten o'clock at night, to the inexpreſſible joy of every part of my company.

FINIS.

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ERRATA.

Page 20, line penult. *for* Boweſman's, *read* Bowerman's.
49, line 13, *after* water's edge. *Omitted* "This bank, however, does not, in the leaſt, intercept the views of Spithead, St. Helen's Road, and the oppoſite ſhores, either from the manſion-houſe, or from the lawn before it."
61, line 8, *for* that *read* this.
67, line 14, *for* Bouchurch *read* Bonchurch.
81, line 12, ditto ditto.
82, line 13, *for* alabris *read* Ulubris.
84, lines 7, 10, 15, *for* Bouchurch *read* Bonchurch.
110, line 15, *for* Dover *read* Dúver.
112, line 16, *for* Bouchurch *read* Bonchurch.
113, line 17, *for* and but *read* though.